THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XLIII. ROBERT BONNER, { COR. OF WILLIAM AND SPRUCE STS. SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1887. TERMS, { $3 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 9.

LOVE UPON THE ICE.

BY LILLIE E. BARR.

I.
"Jeannette, the moon is shining bright,
The beautiful world is light and white;
Come, let us such rare hours employ
To catch a vivid, fleeting joy.
We'll buckle the steel
Tight to our heel,
And away! away! for a breezy reel."

II.
She thanked me with a happy face;
She tripped up stairs with rapid grace;
She came down snugly clad and warm;
I vowed to shield her from all harm.
I buckled the steel
Tight to her heel,
And away we went in a mazy reel.

III.
The blazing fires made ruddy lights;
The moon seemed resting on the heights;
We sped along the joyous stream,
As happy souls fly in a dream;
The ringing steel,
From toe to heel,
Made easy every flight and wheel.

IV.
Our pulses quickened in the race;
My eyes were on her lovely face;
Her little hand was tight in mine;
The air was wondrous brisk and fine;
And we could feel
The ringing steel
From heart to heart, from head to heel.

V.
When summer skies were blue above,
I oft had tried to tell my love;
Upon the lake, in shady vale,
I still had found my courage fail:
But ringing steel
Had made me feel
The hour had come for Love's appeal.

VI.
With burning words that could not fail
Upon the ice, I told my tale;
I won her promise with a kiss.
Ah me! the deep, delightsome bliss
Of ringing steel
From toe to heel,
When two are one in all they feel.

◆

THE
Mystery of Black-Tor Light-House
OR,
Parted by Fate.

By LAURA JEAN LIBBEY,

Author of "Which Love Proved True?" "A Broken Betrothal; or, All for Love of a Fair Face," "A Struggle for a Heart," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XIII.

"I WOULD RATHER SEE YOU DEAD IN YOUR YOUTH AND FAIR BEAUTY THAN HIS BRIDE."

We must now return to the thrilling scene transpiring in the underground apartment in which beautiful Verlie Sefton found herself, by the force of strange circumstances, an unwilling prisoner.

When Verlie awoke to consciousness the great pansy-blue eyes flared open wide, wandering around the strange apartment in which she found herself; then up into the face bending over her in the utmost bewilderment.

"Where am I?" she gasped, faintly. "And who are you?"

Black Hagar showed her ivories in a broad grin.

"Ise your nurse, chile," she answered, "an' the pussou who jes left am yer doctor."

"Have I been ill?" whispered Verlie, incredulously.

"Yer ankle war sprained, honey, an' the doctor war fetched to set it."

"Oh, I remember! I remember!" shrieked Verlie, in awful terror. "The duel—and—all that happened after it!

"If this is your house, I pray you to let me go at once," she sobbed, clinging to the old woman's skirts in a transport of grief pitiful to behold. "Those who love me are searching for me in anguish that is more bitter to bear than death. I have a darling sister whose heart must have broken when she returned to the spot where she left me lying unconscious, and found me—gone! I dare not picture it! Oh, Uldene! Uldene!

"And there is another!" she sobbed, piteously—"another who loves me, and who had only that evening asked me to be his bride! Oh! what must he be suffering, my handsome, noble love, whom I love so dearly, as the horrible hours drag their slow lengths by! How he must have searched for me! He will go through fire and flood, search the whole world through, but what he will find me; and those who have detained me here will feel the full force of his vengeance.

"Oh, Rutledge! my love! my love!" moaned Verlie. "Heaven grant that you may find me soon!"

"It's many a long day afore yer lover would think o' findin' yer ha'ar, honey," laughed Black Hagar.

"Oh, if I could but persuade you to help me to get away from here!" sobbed Verlie. "He who mourns my loss so keenly would reward you with plenty of gold if you would but help me."

"Chile, I wouldn't dare ter do it," declared Black Hagar. "Ise powerful 'fraid of the cap'n. He am a reg'lar debbil. He brung yer ha'ar hisself, an' says he when he left de room, 'Hagar, Ise gwine ter leave dat gal under yer eye, an' ef I don't find she am ha'ar when I cum back, I wouldn't give much for yer ole black hide; you min' my words!' So you see, honey, I wouldn't dare ter. Why, chile, he'd murder me! He am none ter good ter do it."

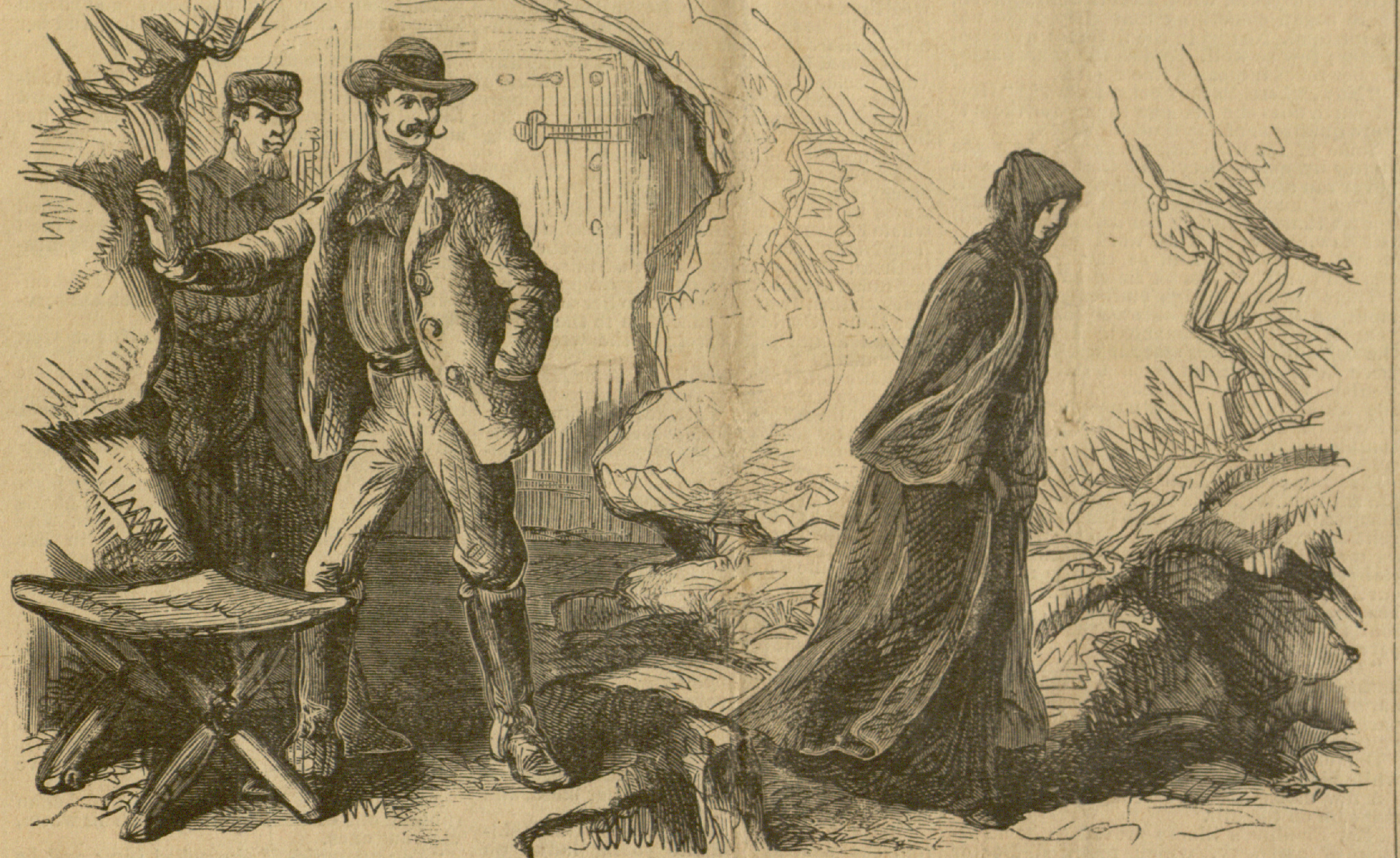
"Oh, Heaven! what awful fate has conspired against me?" sobbed Verlie, wringing her little hands. "I cannot see where all this will lead to. Oh, pity me, Hagar! If you will not set me free, kill me! Better death than that I should fall into the hands of the man who brought me here!"

"Lor, chile, don't yer talk like that. Old Hagar wouldn't tech one ha'ar o' yer golden head fer all Marse Cap'n's ill-gotten gold. Guess not! But let me give yer a bit o' ad-wise, honey. For de good Lor's sake, chile, don't go for to rilin' of him up. Yer don't know de cap'n like I do. 'Member ole Hagar's warnin'. De cap'n am a fierce debbil."

Left to herself, Verlie thought over the situation until she grew frantic with terror.

"Had Heaven shut her out from its mercy?" she asked herself.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1887, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



VERLIE'S ESCAPE.

There was no sleep for Verlie as the hours dragged by.

It was well for her that there was not. As she lay there thinking over some plan by which she might make her escape, the sound of cautious footsteps fell upon her ear; they drew nearer and nearer, and the blood froze in Verlie's veins, as they halted outside the door.

She gave a suppressed cry.

"Hush!" whispered a voice which she instantly recognized as the captain's. "As you [illegible] errand which concerns you vitally. You must listen to what I have to say. Send Hagar to unbar the door; every moment is precious."

"I will *not* unbar the door," cried Verlie. "I am thankful that those bolts form even a slight protection in keeping you out."

"You *must* listen to what I have to say to you," repeated the young captain, sternly; "it is a matter of life and death, I assure you upon my honor."

"A life, or a death, for that matter, weighs little with *you*," retorted the girl, bravely; "and as for honor—a man who willfully abducts a young girl, and keeps her a captive, because she has by chance stumbled upon the nefarious calling of himself and his wicked associates, is dead to the word—honor. I would not trust you."

"I know full well that I have forfeited your respect, by what you have seen and heard," he said, in an agitated whisper, "but there is this much honor about me—I must warn you of the fatal consequence your discovery, and your persistent assertions that you would bring the officers of the law upon us the first moment we set you free, has brought upon you.

"The men's solemn conference has ended. They intend to show you no mercy. The sentence they have passed upon you is imprisonment for life within these walls, and that would be worse than death for you. Aye, death would be a thousand times more merciful than life among these lawless men. Even if you did consent to an oath of silence now, it would be too late."

Verlie did not faint; she did not cry out, or utter any moan; the horror of his words held her spell-bound. She was young and brave—life seemed sweet to her. She realized that what he said was perfectly true. These outlaws, who could thus defy the laws of men, would have no scruple in defying the law of God; even if they made way with her, the world would be none the wiser.

"There is but one escape for you," whispered her captor, "and that is, to become my bride. I am a reckless, defiant man, Miss Sefton; but your beauty won my heart at first sight. The abhorrence in your beautiful eyes awoke me to a sense of my downfall from the ranks of honorable men. Be my wife, and you shall leave this place forever. A wife could give no evidence against a husband; you would—"

"Stop!" cried Verlie: "I will not listen."

"I beg you will take time to consider," he said, earnestly.

"I need no time to consider," replied Verlie, with ringing scorn. "Do you think that freedom or life itself is worth purchasing at the cost of becoming *your* wife?" cried the girl, with passionate vehemence. "Do you think I could clasp the hand at the altar that was stained with blood?"

The man upon the other side of the cavern door winced under the scathing words. A strange gleam shot into his eyes; a fearful panorama passed instantaneously before his mental vision. He could imagine a lost soul gazing from the deep abyss of Hades into the felicity and joy of Heaven, fully realizing that all hope for him was lost forever.

He began to realize that a dark chasm yawned between himself and this fair girl; a fatal line streaked his hand, which would forever shadow the grasp of a purer one.

It is a mistake to suppose that crime-steeped souls cannot love. The basest criminal, strange as it may seem, can love as intensely, though not as purely or unselfishly, as the noblest hero.

From the moment his eyes had rested upon the beautiful girl who had dared defy him so bravely and audaciously, the wish came to this bad man that he had lived a different life that he might have wooed and, in time, won her. A moment he hesitated.

"Do you love any one else? Will you answer me that, Miss Sefton?"

"Yes," came the quivering reply, in a choked, girlish voice, "I do. If you had not detained me here I should now be the betrothed bride of a good and noble man, one who could never stoop to a dishonorable action, and whom I love with all my heart. Oh, sir, would it be of any use to plead with you to restore us to each other? Mr. Rutledge Chester would reward you well for aiding me, I am sure."

[illegible] an arrow had suddenly pierced his [illegible]

"What!" he cried, fierc[illegible] "is Rutledge Chester the man you love—that man, above all other men, whom I have reason to hate so bitterly—the man that made me what I am, drove me from the ranks of honorable men by exposing me, and made me a hunted criminal on the face of the earth? Restore you to *him? I would see you dead at my feet first!* Why, his very name rouses a very demon in my heart! And to think that he should have crossed my path again—that he, of all others, should have won the love of the only being I have ever met whom I could care for! It is maddening!

"I vowed once that I would pay him back, at a bitter cost, for what happened in the past. I see a way now to that very end. I bided my time. No, you shall never go free, save as *my wife!*

"We are preparing to leave this place in the course of a month for a lengthy voyage, but you go with us. Remember, I would rather see you dead at my feet—in all your youth and your fair young beauty—than see you Rutledge Chester's bride!"

He stood away from the door, his handsome face fairly livid with satanic rage; but his last words had fallen upon deaf ears. Verlie had fainted.

"Was there ever such a tangled web woven by inexorable fate!" he muttered, twisting the ends of his mustache with his white, shapely hand. "She loves Rutledge Chester."

CHAPTER XIV.

CLOSE BESIDE THE ROADSIDE LAY A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL.

In the intense darkness of the cavern, he did not see the slim, girlish figure that had followed him close to the door, and had listened, with bated breath and face pale as death, to every word that had been uttered.

"He cares for this beautiful stranger," she muttered, with a dry, hard sob. "Oh, what a rude awakening from my dream. I thought he loved me. His eyes said so, even though his lips did not. I might one day have been his bride, if this golden-haired girl had not come between us with her pretty face. Oh, fatal day for me that she was brought here."

Going around by another entrance, and passing through Hagar's apartment, she found herself in Verlie's presence.

With swift step she crossed the room and stood, with darkening brow, gazing down upon the prostrate figure the swinging lamp dimly revealed to her.

Ah, the stranger was more beautiful than any poet's dream, with her white, delicately-chiseled face, framed in its sheen of floating golden hair, upturned to the dim light.

A bitter pang of jealousy smote the girl's heart as she gazed.

As if attracted by that magnetic gaze, Verlie's white eyelids flutter open, and she looks up in dismay into the face bending over her. The next moment she has struggled to her knees, clinging to the girl's skirts with an agony of entreaty pitiful to behold.

"Will you help me to leave this place?" she pleaded, frantically. "You are a young girl like myself. You must be tender of heart. I implore you to aid me. Restore me to my friends, and you shall be well rewarded for it. Think how they must suffer. It will break my poor father's and mother's hearts when they are told of my strange disappearance."

"You would not like to accept the alternative that would release you from this place? You would rebel against wedding the man who brought you here?" the girl asked, breathlessly, a strange glitter in her eyes as she spoke.

"The very thought would drive me to madness," moaned Verlie, with passionate vehemence.

"I will help you to leave this very night upon one condition," answered the girl, shortly.

"And that?" whispered Verlie, breathlessly.

"And that," repeated the girl, in a hurried whisper, "is that you take an oath of silence never to reveal this retreat, and never to mention to a living being what you have seen or heard from the fatal hour you chanced to [illegible] that duel to [illegible] I have a father and a brother here, and one whom I love better than life. For their sake I must exact a solemn vow of secrecy, or I dare not aid you. Don't you see?"

"Yes," said Verlie, huskily. "I can understand the situation, and for your sake I would vow eternal secrecy."

"You could say, without going far from the truth, that you were found with a sprained ankle, and taken care of until you were able to be about, and that, being delirious, your friends could not be communicated with.

"You must make haste if you would escape to-night," the girl went on, with a strange thrill of excitement in her voice, "for it is almost daylight now."

She silenced the joyful cry on Verlie's lips by saying, huskily:

"You must wear my cloak and my broad hat. You can discard them, and leave them at the first bend in the road, beneath the tall oak there, and don your own.

"There is but one exit, and that leads through a room in which a number of the men are congregated. You must trust to your own bravery to pass you through that trying ordeal; it will be fraught with greatest danger. If any one should call out to you or speak to you, make some excuse. Your voice is not unlike mine."

She threw her own dark, waterproof cloak over Verlie, who noticed, as those slim hands touched her, how they trembled, and how death-cold they were.

At last, Verlie, quivering with suppressed excitement, stood ready. She had given her solemn promise to that which her rescuer required.

"You will give me your name," she whispered, "that I may never cease to bless you for what you have done for me this night."

"You must know me only as Kelpie; that is what they call me here. When you are home with your friends, when you are happy with him whom you love, you will sometimes think of me, will you not?" she asked. "And whenever you think of Kelpie, forget her surroundings. Think of her kindly, and at her best.

"Go now," she added, drawing her ice-cold hands from Verlie's clasp. "Follow that winding cavern to the end. That will be to freedom. Good-by, and may God speed you."

She threw the door open wide, and like a storm-driven swallow, panting with fear at every step, Verlie flew down the narrow, subterranean, winding passage. She had nearly reached the end of the passage, when, turning a sharp curve, she found herself confronted by two men.

Verlie's heart seemed to contract with sudden fear. She dared not turn back, and a few feet more would bring her abreast of them. If they discovered her identity, all was lost.

She nerved herself for the terrible ordeal.

One of the men turned his head and saw her.

"Why, Kelpie," he said, approaching her, "what in the world takes you out before daybreak? What are you up to now? Some mischief, I'll be bound."

"Only a walk," replied Verlie, her heart palpitating so pitifully loud she was quite sure he must hear its beating, in her great anxiety and terror lest she failed to make her voice sound just like Kelpie's.

"Would you mind having company?" he asked, banteringly.

She shook off his hand from her arm, and dashed past him before he could obtain a good view of her face. A moment more, and —oh, joy! joy!—she had emerged into the gray, dull, misty morning light; the free air of heaven blew across her face.

"How strangely Kelpie acts," said the man, gazing after the flying, slim, girlish figure.

"She has not been the same since the lovely, golden-haired little beauty was brought here," laughed his companion. "She's afraid the captain has fallen in love with her; and that's just exactly what he's done. It's a pity, for poor Kelpie is so fond of him."

Both laughed and hurried on.

Meanwhile, Verlie found herself once more in the old isolated cemetery, where the fatal accident had happened which had led to such grave results. The swollen, sprained ankle, which had not had time to mend properly, commenced paining again acutely, and by the time she had reached the main road, became so excruciating that poor Verlie threw up her hands and fell, face downward, in the snowdrifts in a dead faint, with the name, Rutledge, on her quivering lips.

When the sun rose, pink and golden, over the eastern hills, it fell upon her upturned face, half vailed by the sweeping golden hair that trailed over the white drifts. Her hands were locked closely together, low moans issuing from her lips.

A young man, driving hurriedly along, suddenly drew rein by the roadside, and gazed, with a cry of surprise on his lips.

"A young and beautiful girl!" he ejaculated, in great astonishment, as he leaped from his sleigh. "What can she be doing here, I wonder?"

He touched the lovely little white hands gently. They were burning hot. Carefully he raised the slight figure, and placed it in his sleigh.

"It is clearly evident that I cannot leave her here," he mused.

It seemed such a pity to take that fair young creature to a charity hospital.

Then a sudden idea occurred to him. Why not take her home? His mother, of all people in the world, would know just what to do for the beautiful, hapless young stranger.

It was scarcely ten miles to his home, if he cut across lots, taking the byways. To reach it in a roundabout way by the road was over twice the distance.

Turning his horse's head, he gave the spirited animal a cut with his whip, and away they went spinning over the white, crusted snow. Within an hour he had drawn rein before a fine country-house, sprung from the sleigh, and was hurrying up the broad gravel walk toward the door.

A young girl, brown as a gypsy, who had been out on the side porch feeding the snow-birds, gave a slight scream.

"Oh, mother, mother! do come here, quick, and see what brother Dick has in his arms! It looks like a coffin—no—it's a young girl!" she exclaimed, in breathless dismay.

By this time Mr. Richard Temple had reached the curious young romp, who had bounded down the path to meet him, fairly [illegible]

"For mercy's sake, who have you got there, Dick?" she cried, with great, wild, dilated eyes. "Who in the world is that, and what's the matter with her?"

"Don't ask so many questions, Edna!" exclaimed her brother, impatiently. "Run on to the house and open the door, and get mother; and run quick and see if there's hot water, and blankets, and mustard, and peppermint. Now, for goodness' sake, don't stand there staring, Edna, with your eyes and mouth wide open. Don't you see this poor thing is nearly dead? I don't know what's the matter with her."

"Great goodness!" ejaculated Edna, with a low whistle. "You don't say so!" The gypsyish tomboy always exasperated Mr. Temple.

"Edna," he cried, impatiently and sharply, "*will* you run ahead to open the door or not?"

"Of course," gasped Edna, still staring with all her might at the slim figure he held in his arms. But, alas! for Edna's headlong haste—she never could be depended on in cases of emergency—with every step forward she slipped back two, and as Richard Temple crossed the porch he looked back just in time to see the black, curly head and a pair of heels scrambling out of a huge snow-drift, into which she had been precipitated headlong.

CHAPTER XV.

"SO PERISH ALL MY HOPES AND MY BRIEF DREAM OF LOVE."

Mrs. Temple had caught a glimpse of her son from the window, and hurried to the door to open it for him.

In a few brief words the son had explained the exact situation of affairs.

"Of course, you acted for the best, as you supposed, in bringing her here, Richard," she said; "but I have always been just a little dubious about taking in strangers. I hope it will turn out well;" and she glanced at the eager, flushed face of her handsome young son.

The lady would have been better pleased if the stranger had been less fair to look upon.

"Dick is young, and youth is always impressible," she thought, as she led the way to a cozy morning room; "who knows but what it may end in his falling in love with her."

That thought sent a thrill of terror to Mrs. Temple's heart.

Dick had deposited his lovely burden on the divan, and his mother had taken charge of her, hastening to remove her hat and throw off the dark cloak. She put back the fair, curling hair from the lovely face, and as she did so, a startled cry fell from her lips.

"Why, Dick, I know this young girl!" she exclaimed. "You must telegraph Senator Chester and his wife at once; it is one of the young ladies who have been stopping at their house for the last month or so. You have heard of the two school-girls—the brunette and the lovely little blonde who have caused such a furore in social circles lately. This is the petite little blonde—lovely Verlie Sefton. You must go over to the way-station and telegraph Mrs. Chester at once. There must have been an accident—a runaway; her ankle is badly sprained."

And this was the mysterious telegram which puzzled Mrs. Chester quite a little when she received it, and which took her post haste to Mrs. Temple's, the home of her old friend.

Mrs. Chester's intense surprise and joy upon beholding Verlie can better be imagined than described. She would have taken her home at once, but it was deemed advisable for the sprained ankle to remain perfectly inactive for a day or so. Then it would be as good as new; the sprain, though painful, was slight, after all.

Mrs. Chester concluded to give Rutledge and Uldene a complete surprise, by not telegraphing—not letting them know what a startling surprise she had for them.

How amazed they would be when she entered, leading Verlie by the hand. Ah! how happy Rutledge would be—her darling boy, who loved beautiful, golden-haired Verlie so well!

In the excitement of accounting for her absence—as she had solemnly promised—*she had not mentioned that she had left the house in company with Uldene*, and Mrs. Chester never dreamed of questioning her closely.

And there was another subject upon which the senator's wife was reticent: she knew Verlie was by far too coy and bashful to discuss a love affair with her—Rutledge's mother.

While we leave Mrs. Chester and Verlie journeying homeward—all unprepared for the shock they are to meet there—we will return to the events which have been transpiring since that fatal night on which, for better or for worse, Uldene and Rutledge Chester were wedded.

We will go back, dear reader, to that weird and solemn death-bed marriage.

It was a pitiful sight to see the white face lying back against the pillow, the white hands clinging to the strong hands that held them, and the great, dark, wondrous eyes, half vailed by the long, silken, curling lashes, gazing with a world of love in them into the white, handsome, sorrowful face bending over her.

"My—wife," he says, in a choked, hard voice.

Those were the words she had said she wanted to hear last on earth—but somehow they hurt him. He had dreamed of the hour when he should say those words *to another*—lovely, golden-haired Verlie, whom he loved with all the mad, passionate love of his heart, and whom he had pictured many a day as his bride.

In a single hour the face of heaven and earth had changed for him. And oh!—how strange a fate—he was breathing those sacred words, *my wife*, over another—an unloved bride.

"Hold my hands clasped closely," the girl murmured, in gasping terrror. "I—I am slipping away from life—clasp my hands until all is over. It will be but for a few brief moments. Heaven has been kind to me," whispered the quavering voice. "I shall die looking on your face. I am dying, and I may tell you now how I have loved you," she went on with all the unconscious pathos of a little child. "I should never have told you this, but I am dying—"

"Poor Uldene!" he murmured, pityingly. "Poor child!"

A great wave of sorrow sweeps over his heart. He holds the little, death-cold hands closer, and watches the lovely, despairing face that grows whiter and whiter with each struggling breath.

The hush grows deeper. There is the silence of death in the room. The housekeeper buries her head in the white counterpane and sobs bitterly. The consulting doctors look significantly and gravely at each other, and turn their faces away.

Slowly the white, heavy-fringed eyelids commenced to fall over the dark, wistful, glazed eyes, shutting out the face she had loved so well—only Heaven above knew how well.

A great wave of infinite pity filled Rutledge Chester's heart. Poor Uldene! how much she had cared for him!

He bent his handsome head over her, and pressed his warm lips to the cold, white, clammy ones. It was the first caress and the last he would ever give her in life. She would sink into the sleep of death with that kiss trembling on her lips.

"Uldene!—my bride!" he murmurs again, in compassionate pity. But mark the wondrous change that lights up the marble face upon which the cold death-dew stands. That kiss and the sound of the voice she loved so dearly has drawn her soul back from the dark valley of the shadow of death—back to life and the world from which she was slipping.

The tide goes out with a dreary wash, but it does not bear Uldene's soul out with it. The doctors bend forward with a cry of surprise, used as they are to surprises.

The film breaks slowly away from the eyes that never leave Rutledge Chester's white, handsome, startled face.

A faint tinge spread over the clammy brow and the pale lips that Rutledge Chester, in his infinite pity, has pressed with a last good-by caress. The pulse-beat grows more distinct—the chilled heart flutters ever so faintly.

"It is my opinion that your bride *will live*, Mr. Chester," whispered the doctor. "Those timely words and that kiss called her back from the grave," he said, solemnly.

Like one in a dream, Rutledge Chester lifts his haggard face. Had he heard aright, or were his senses playing him false?

"It is quite true," repeated the doctor, cheerfully. "I am pleased to tell you that your bride will live."

He had not loved her, yet a strange thrill of thankfulness shot through his heart as he looked down into the beautiful face.

The great, dark, slumbrous eyes sought his with a look of entreaty piteous to behold.

"You are sorry, Rutledge!" she gasped, faintly.

"No, Uldene," he whispered, with deep feeling, "I thank Heaven your young life has been spared."

The doctor touched Rutledge lightly on the arm.

"She needs rest and quiet now. After a good sleep there will be a marked improvement in her condition. I will watch alone by her bedside an hour more."

The occupants of the room rose slowly and quitted the apartment so lately clouded by the brooding shadows of death.

With slow, unsteady steps, Rutledge Chester sought the library and shut himself in.

Never was a man caught in such a web by the strange machinations of fate—wedded to one woman, while every pulse-beat of his heart throbbed with love for another. To him the present was full of misery and the future all dark.

A prince might have been proud to woo and win beautiful Uldene, with her wondrous dower of beauty for his bride. She would have charmed any man with her divine loveliness. Perhaps out of the whole wide world this man who had married her was the only one who could have looked upon her without emotion.

A sense of the cruel wrong that a loveless marriage would be to her came over Rutledge, but it could not be helped.

He had often heard and read of the idolatrous love of women, but surely there never was such a fatal, unfortunate, pathetic love as that which filled the heart of beautiful, hapless Uldene.

He had given Uldene his name, but he could never give her his heart. He had none to give. His heart had passed out of his keeping the first moment he had looked into the eyes of Verlie.

But he must put all thoughts of Verlie away from him now, henceforth and forever. He arose and took from his writing-desk a little glove, a bit of ribbon, and a faded blossom, and laid them sorrowfully on the blazing coals of the grate.

A moment more and only the ashes remained.

"So perish my hopes and my brief dream of love," he said.

Yet, even in that moment of bitter despair, he could not find it in his heart to curse the fate that fettered him—until death parted them—to Uldene, whose great, worshipful love won from him the profoundest pity.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

—We ought not to judge other people by their beliefs, because we do not know how they have been brought about; but we may justly apply the crucial test to our own views, and honor or dishonor them accordingly.

LIGHT AT LAST.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

The little town of Claremont was celebrated for its pretty girls. The palm of beauty, however, was yielded universally to Jewell Hastings. Yet, strange to tell, although twenty-two, she had never had an acknowledged suitor; but there was not one of the boys who had grown up with her who would not have been proud and happy to have served her in any way.

There was one, young Harry Lawton, the doctor, who was oftener seen with her than any other.

When Harry's uncle, the best loved and most skillful physician in the town, passed from earth the folks transferred their confidence to his nephew and namesake. Thus it was that Harry, being Jewell's aunt's medical adviser—in fact, her adviser on *all* subjects—was thrown almost constantly in the beautiful girl's society. And she, like her aunt, placing full confidence in the young man, did not hesitate to call on him if she needed an escort at any time. Yet never for a moment did Harry Lawton draw any flattering inference regarding his position with Jewell. He understood her perfectly.

Jewell Hastings lived with her aunt, a maiden lady, whose worldly goods amounted only to the little cottage in which they lived and a small amount of money, the interest of which supplied their necessary wants. The neighbors all knew exactly just their situation. But after a few years, when Jewell was eighteen, there began something that they could not understand. No girl in the little town dressed better; few as well. And as the years passed on her robes increased in elegance.

"Now, where do they come from?" "How on earth does she manage to pay for them?" were questions of the time and town.

Some of the wise folks declared she made money by embroidery, and that was *why* she never ran about like the other girls. But this was not much credited, for it was generally known that, admitting her dresses numbered but few, a year's hard work of *that* kind would not do it. And so the mystery remained to all but Doctor Lawton.

There was on a high eminence, in Claremont, an old mansion, once very elegant. For years it had been untenanted. At the time of the beginning of this story it was rumored to have been purchased by a family of great wealth, who were to occupy it. Very soon the windows were thrown open, and a band of workmen entered. Immediately after the completion of their work the new purchasers came—only a widow and her son.

A few days after their arrival Doctor Lawton sat reading in his office. A knock called his attention. In answer to his "Come in," a gentleman entered. Before one word had escaped his lips, Harry Lawton mentally exclaimed: "Here is the prince who may win our Jewell;" yet it was not merely the physical beauty that attracted the doctor, but the soul that beamed in his eye, the spirit that pervaded his entire bearing.

"Will you be kind enough to come with me immediately? My mother is extremely ill. I dared not trust a servant, as haste is all important. My name is Fielding. I have a conveyance here."

Doctor Lawton was drawing on his coat, while his visitor spoke.

A few moments' drive brought them to the mansion on the hill.

Mrs. Fielding's illness proved to be an attack of apoplexy, which required Doctor Lawton's attention through the night, and for several days after. During these visits quite an intimacy grew between Harry Lawton and Ernest Fielding. The favorable opinion formed on their first meeting daily increased, and Harry found himself continually thinking:

"Yes, they were made for each other."

Ernest Fielding was an artist; his soul filled with poetic visions. Every hour that Harry Lawton could spare from his patients and study was spent in the studio of his friend. During one of these visits it was that Harry spoke of Jewell, fancying some slight resemblance in one of the ideal faces.

"Go with me to church to-morrow. You will see her there. After, if you desire, I will get her permission to introduce you," said Harry.

Gladly Ernest Fielding accepted the invitation. The next day, before entering the church, he expressed the desire to find Miss Hastings without Harry directing his attention.

There were at least a dozen beautiful girls that passed out of the church as Harry and his friend stood near the door.

When Jewell came, with expression of mingled admiration and surprise, Ernest Fielding moved slowly behind her out of the church-yard, Harry following beside him. Neither spoke until Jewell had passed out of hearing.

"Well?" Harry said.

"Of course, that was Miss Hastings. She is beautiful. If you can, present me as soon as possible."

Jewell had not failed to notice the handsome stranger; and Doctor Lawton had a cordial consent to his bringing his friend the next evening.

As Harry Lawton had expected, very soon Ernest Fielding was loving Jewell with the full strength of his ardent, loving nature. Of course, Harry was his confidant, and to him he said:

"It seems as though my life had been almost a blank; that I never truly lived before I knew her. If I do not win her, the light of my life is lost. The world will be perfect darkness."

Little thought his friend how prophetic were his words.

"Nonsense, Fielding. You will win our Jewell, I feel sure. If she intended sending you from her she never would have permitted your getting near enough to think of winning her. Hope everything."

The next evening Fielding had been reading to her. Closing the book, he said, his voice trembling with emotion:

"Oh, how can I read to you of others' loves, when my heart is almost bursting to tell its own? Miss Hastings—Jewell, may I tell you?"

The beautiful eyes, which a moment before were raised to his, drooped. A rosy flush suffused the fair face.

"Oh, do you know how truly I love you?" he said, clasping the hand he had gained, and pressing it to his lips.

"I thought and hoped so," Jewell answered, raising her eyes, filled with truth and love, to his.

"Oh, do you mean this? Can it be that you will try to return some of the great love I give you, my precious Jewell? Dear love, I never before to-night have breathed or known another love. Speak, Jewell!"

"I love you!" she whispered low.

And Ernest was satisfied and profoundly happy.

"Good-night, sweet love. To-morrow I may come, or I shall think this joy only a bright, deceiving dream if I do not see you and hear one little loving word in the daylight."

Ah, a dream it was, as brief as bright. The next day, while waiting Ernest's coming, she received the following note:

"MY OWN JEWELL: An unexpected and pressing commission to P—— will prevent my being with you until this evening. I shall return by eight o'clock and hasten to you. Heaven bless and keep you, darling. Devotedly,

"ERNEST."

A few hours after the reception of this Jewell still was seated in her little parlor, when the servant, opening the door, said:

"Mrs. Fielding, Miss Jewell."

With a warm, bright smile Jewell extended her hand, and drew towards her guest the most comfortable chair.

An expression of suppressed admiration nearly escaped Mrs. Fielding's lips. And she thought:

"No wonder! She is beautiful enough to turn any man's brain." She said:

"Miss Hastings,"—the face was rigid and cold,—"my visit is not a pleasant one. Last night Ernest told me of this foolish affair." She hesitated. "Well, I may as well explain my business at once. But you must not tell Ernest I've been here. This morning I sent him off, to have the opportunity of seeing you. I want him to marry a distant cousin. They were pledged to each other when babies."

"Rest assured, madam, I shall not enter any family unless they are happy and proud to welcome me. Your son shall never hear from my lips that his mother is not all he would wish her. Now, madam, if you will excuse me, I will bid you good afternoon."

That same afternoon Jewell left Claremont. Her aunt followed a few days after, leaving the cottage and its effects for Doctor Lawton to either sell or rent. When Ernest Fielding called that evening, to his infinite surprise and distress, he received the following:

"DEAR ERNEST: Last evening, when I told you I loved you, I meant it. You will doubt me now. Do not. I shall always love you, and pray to God daily to remove the obstacle to our union. An unforeseen circumstance separates us. Trust me, as I do Heaven, and pray that we may meet again, when no earthly power can separate us. Do not seek to find me. It would be useless, until the obstacle is removed. Then I will come to you.

"Only and truly yours, JEWELL."

Five years had passed since Ernest received this note. As he said, truly, the light of his life went out. Not quickly; gradually the terrible truth came. It seemed quite impossible for Doctor Lawton to arouse him to any interest in anything, except to lavish his wealth among the poor for miles around. Gradually he fell into miserable health, without an effort to arrest the disease.

It seemed as if Providence was expressing very decided disapproval of Mrs. Fielding's course. And she felt it. "Riches take unto themselves wings." And truly, so it was with hers. Except the house in Claremont and a few hundred dollars, all was gone.

Long ere this the mystery of Jewell's money-making was explained. From the stores of her brain she drew wealth. The whole country, and across the great waters, found delight in the gems of thought she gave to them. Mrs. Fielding knew of this, and in her remorse and regret, one day dropped a remark that fully explained all to her son. Too late then. Could she offer then to the world-renowned and gifted woman the wreck she had made?

A little note from Jewell to Doctor Lawton, with this sentence: "Tell me something of the Fieldings," carried to her the following:

"Possibly you may have heard that by the defalcation of their lawyer they are reduced almost to poverty. This, although to be deeply regretted, is nothing in comparison to Ernest's affliction. Long since, I discerned the approach of a dreaded malady. I did my best to arrest this. Finally I urged, and, indeed, entreated him to seek more efficient advice. But in vain. And now he is quite blind."

Five days after the mailing of this, Doctor Lawton was surprised beyond expression to see enter his office Jewell Hastings.

After the usual greeting, she said:

"Doctor, I want you to go with me to Mrs. Fielding. I will tell you now. She sent me from Ernest, five years ago. Perhaps she will let me come to him now. For his sake I will try."

After Doctor Lawton had introduced Miss Hastings to Mrs. Fielding, he would have withdrawn, but Jewell put out her hand, and said:

"Stay!" And turning again to Mrs. Fielding, she asked: "Is the young lady you wished as a daughter willing to marry Ernest now?"

"Nay. Why do you wish to taunt me with my misery? No, no."

"Think you of *any* whom you would wish that would be his wife?" Jewell continued.

"No, no. What has he to offer? Blind and poor, too."

"Not *one*? Think!" Jewell cried.

"Not one—unless—forgive me—unless it be *you!*"

"And *you*—what say *you*?" Jewell's calmness had all fled, and almost wildly now she placed her hand on Mrs. Fielding, and cried again: "Speak!"

"I would [illegible] But oh, no, no! You, in your pride and [illegible]—"

"Would I willingly, gladly, aye, *joyfully* marry him this day! Where is he? Nay, I will find him. I will call you soon, Doctor. Wait."

Her heart directed rightly. Gently she opened the door, and with noiseless steps reached his side. Kneeling on a stool at his feet she threw off her hat, and resting her head on his breast, she took the thin, white hand and passed it over her hair, on her face, and pressed it to her lips.

"Oh, God! Can it be? Jewell!—oh, my darling!" Ernest cried, his whole frame trembling with emotion.

"Yes, love; here I am. All is right now. I shall never leave you again."

"Yes, yes; I cannot permit this sacrifice. I have nothing to offer now," he said, yet clasping her closer.

"Your love is the dearest thing on earth to me. Unless I have lost *that*, I shall stay," and she nestled her beautiful head closer to his own.

That evening there was a quiet wedding. Three days after Ernest Fielding, his wife and Doctor Lawton sailed for France.

After an absence of scarcely a year they returned to Claremont. Rapidly the joyful news spread through the surrounding country. Light had again been given to Ernest's life. By God's blessing on a French oculist's skill, a wonderful operation had been successful.

Doctor Lawton is not married. He is perfectly devoted to Jewell's little children. One, her namesake, he declares he shall marry some day. Stranger things have happened.

◆

CRYSTABEL'S TRIAL.

BY FANNIE BELLE IRVING.

"Crystabel! Crystabel!"

It was a man's voice that uttered the name, and it was filled with pleading, passionate intensity. He drew a little nearer as he spoke, and looked as though that utterance of her name was but the prefix to an eloquent pleading. But she interrupted him, saying:

"Mr. Chaloner, you forget yourself."

"I only wish I could," he answered, huskily, "if, in forgetting myself, I could forget you. Crystabel! Crystabel! do not turn from me! Be my wife! Try to love me! Oh, child—"

"Mr. Chaloner," interrupted Crystabel, haughtily, "this is worse than useless. Say no more. I will not listen. And be so kind as to let me pass. I would return to the ball-room."

For a moment a struggle took place within him. He stood in her way, and as he looked at her, so exquisitely beautiful, with the pale light quivering over her delicate lace draperies sprinkled with pearls, he thought should he let her go, or tell her why he had spoken—what was the great blow that had broken down the barrier of his long silence?

"Will you allow me to pass?" repeated Crystabel, an angry flame coloring her delicate cheek and sparkling in her lovely eyes. "This is, to say the least, ungentlemanly."

"Wait," he said, huskily, "just a moment, and for God's sake listen to me, child. I would never have spoken to you of this. My love should have died as it has lived—in silence. But I—I would save you!"

"*Save me!*" She threw her head back in defiance, and her suddenly clenching hand snapped the frail ivory sticks of her fan. "I will not ask you what you mean. I will not even try to conjecture. You deal in enigmas and insults. Let me pass!"

As if she had struck him he stepped aside, but even in the blazing heat of her anger, she saw and always remembered the agonized pain and pallor of his face.

The next moment she was gone, and he sank down on a seat under the dew-ladened vines, with a bitter groan.

"Lost! lost! my one love! And how will she bear the blow that is to come? How can she—reared in the rose-leaf lap of luxury and delicate as a snowflake—battle with poverty and the world? It will kill her!—kill her! And I, who would lay down my life for her, must see it all and be unable to help!"

With what rapid, swinging strides trouble, grief, and despair march across the sunny paths of our lives, and blast all the future with their baleful shadows!

Three hours after Crystabel swept away from her lover in haughty, insulting anger, she knew what he had meant when he said that he would save her. All that he had known must happen, she now knew had happened. Summoned from the ball in cruel, unwarned haste, she now stood in her laces, jewels, flowers and beauty, in the midst of ruin, disgrace and death.

Her father lay dead by his own hand in one room, her mother in terrified convulsions in another, and the house—her beautiful, luxurious home—was filled with officers and men.

And she—she, the dainty belle, the sensitive hot-house plant, the frail, delicate girl, who had known naught but sunshine, luxury, and laughter from the hour of her birth—what did she do?

With a vivid clearness as stinging as death, she heard them tell how it was—the old story of temptation and fall, and death as the only alternative to life-long disgrace.

And then her stunned heart and brain turned from the dead to the living, and her only words were:

"Let me go to my mother."

Almost immediately after she left the ball-room, Gilbert Chaloner heard of it, and heard the idle wonderings of the gay ones at her sudden summons.

"Merciful heavens!" he muttered. "Can it have come so soon, and she gone alone to face it? The blow will kill her."

And with all haste he followed and reached her home, only to find that the blow had been worse than he dreamed, that the guilty husband and father was dead.

"Where is she? Miss Carlisle?" he stammered to one of the terrified, speechless servants who flocked in the hall.

"There, sir, with mistress," was his answer, as the man pointed to the door.

And there he went, to be struck motionless with surprise on the threshold. What he had expected to see was Crystabel in hysterics of terror and grief, watched and tended by the devoted, heart-broken mother. What he saw was Crystabel on her knees by a low couch, her face white, still and tearless, her eyes on her mother's insensible face, her own hands eagerly chafing those cold, lifeless ones. The creamy-hearted pearls still glowed in her sunny hair and clasped her white throat.

In all her exquisite laces she knelt there like an angel, and forgot her own grief in trying to comfort her mother.

She did not see him, and it was several moments before he could sufficiently recover himself to advance and speak to her.

"Can I do anything?"

She started a little, and lifted her eyes, stunned and dreary in their unspeakable anguish.

"Nothing—unless you can help me save her," she said.

And he at once knelt beside her and began rubbing one of the cold hands with his warm, vigorous ones.

"You knew this?" she asked him; and he marvelled at her voice, so monotonously cold and calm.

"Yes," he answered, simply, "most of it. "But I did not dream of the ending."

She said no more, nor did he. The hours wore away, and gray dawn began to supersede dusky night.

The dead was decently composed, with the ghastly bullet hole in his head covered. The living had been won from insensibility to a drugged resemblance of restful sleep; the crowd had dwindled, and still Crystabel moved about the darkened house like a dumb ghost in her lace robes, with that awfully still anguish in her face that almost drove Gilbert Chaloner wild. For he still remained. He was an old friend—a younger brother in all but blood to the dead man—and it seemed to be his place now.

"Will you not rest?" he said to her at last. "For your mother's sake, I beg of you, try at least."

"Rest!" she repeated, turning her eyes slowly to him—the eyes that so little while ago had sparkled with joyous beauty, but that now seemed steeped in stony, speechless grief. "What time have I for rest now, and what would it be but a mockery? No, no, I have had my day of rest. I must work now."

In mingled astonishment and grief, he could have cried aloud at this change in her. But knowing words to be useless, he said no more. He only went his way and wondered.

The world that speculated and talked and gossiped, received but little satisfaction, after all; Crystabel neither died nor went crazy. A strength, a resolution and depth of character that no one ever dreamed the gay little butterfly could possess, developed under the storms of adversity and trouble. As she had said on that terrible night, work she must, and work she did, earning her own and her mother's daily bread; and, when the gay world no longer knew or sought her out, she felt that she was learning one of life's bitterest lessons, and clung with deeper appreciation and tenderness to the few—very few—friends that were true in shadow as in sunshine. And in reaching the depths of her heart she found at last the love that Gilbert Chaloner had craved, and that had been buried under frivolous gayety; and there, all unknown to her, it had thrived in spite of neglect, but now unearthed and fed with daily thought, it grew to be her life's strongest impulse when it was all too late—too late!

For he never spoke of love now. He was the truest, kindest, best of friends, coming often to their humble home, and never without some delicacy to the invalid mother, who never recovered, but was wasting slowly away. He took every interest that a son and brother could take, and watched over them carefully, managing now and then to help a little, in spite of Crystabel's pride.

But he never spoke or seemed to think of love, and Crystabel bore her aching heart as best she could, and tried to hide any sadness or pain from the mother's watchful eye. But another blow was more than she could bear, and when, in the summer stillness of night, the tenderly loved and devoted mother dropped her weary burden, and quietly passed from troubled sleep to sleep everlasting, Crystabel fainted, with a wild, pleading prayer on her lips to be allowed to die.

Gilbert Chaloner heard of it at once, and with his heart filled to bursting, hurried to her, filled with a resolution to take her, whether she would or not, and cherish her against further grief and suffering; for Crystabel had hidden her heart with sensitive pride. He did not dream that the love he craved above all earthly things was his own at last.

A stillness suggestive of death—but peaceful death, not wild and terror-stricken like the other—rested over the little house, lying slumberously warm in the sunshine. Several kindly neighbors, with tear-filled eyes, lingered on the porch and in the little yard, and whispered to him that Crystabel was alone with her mother in the sitting-room.

And there he went, blinded with tears and dumb with the overwhelming love and pity that filled his whole being.

Crystabel was kneeling beside the dead body, as once before she had knelt by the living one, with her crossed arms and bowed head on the pulseless bosom.

"Crystabel!" he almost stammeringly uttered.

And then she started up. Through the clouds of bitterness and grief that voice went piercingly to her heart, and she forgot everything save her love and her anguished, tearless grief.

"She is dead!" she cried, standing up and facing him. "Dead! And I am alone!—alone!—for even you will desert me now." And the quivering love in her voice told his heart the truth.

For an instant he stood as if stunned; then he was beside her. In his strong arms, that trembled with joy, he clasped her slender, wavering figure. To his great, worshipful heart he pressed her, lifting the sorrowful, lily-white face to his own.

"Desert you, my darling!—my cherished, precious darling! Thank God that you will at last let me love and care for you as my heart has ached to do."

She lifted her eyes shining with love; around his neck she put her arms; and on his breast laid her head with a sigh of perfect trust and devotion.

WIT AND HUMOR.

"You have the advantage of me," said the old merchant, blandly. "You will have to get some one to identify you." "Identify me? Why, I am your son, just back from college for the spring vacation." "Maybe," answered the old gentleman, "but my son did not look like a fool, wear a monkey-tail coat, skin-tight pants, and toothpick shoes, nor did he suck cane-handles. When my wife returns from her visit to my sister in the country, you may present your claims to her, and if she decides that you are our offspring, I shall be happy to bid you an affectionate good-bye on your return to college."

A Dissatisfied Husband.—"Ah, Job," said Mrs. Shuttle, as she wiped her glasses, "I see that the Goddess of Liberty has arrived in this country." "Yes, yes," replied Job, "and if I could be sure that the Goddess of Liberty could be induced to preside over our little household I should be happy." "Job Shuttle! Aren't you ashamed of yourself? What more liberty do you want? You were at the lodge three nights this week, and at some game every afternoon. Do you want to make your life one grand Saturnalia?" "With your permission," meekly replied Job.

At a street corner up town is a blind man who carries a board upon his breast with this singular sign: "Blind by Birth and by Accident." "See here, my good man," said a passer-by, "your sign is positively distracting. Can you tell us how you happen to be blind by birth and by accident at the same time?" "Easy enough," said the old man. "You see, I'm blind by birth myself, and I've bought out a blind man who did business around the opposite corner. He was blind by accident."

At a watering place up the shore last summer, an old grandma, who felt free to talk to any and everybody, got into conversation with a young married woman, and asked: "What business is your husband in?" "He's a Wall street broker." "Good gracious! is that possible! What's the longest term the judge can send him up for?"

A gentleman said to one of his friends that for some years his wife persisted in saying that she was only twenty years old. "Mine is more reasonable," replied his friend. "I have succeeded in making her enter her thirties; but I have failed to make her come out of them."

Child, at Washington—"Who are all those men lounging around outside the capitol?" *Parent*—"They are United States senators, my child." "Are there any more senators besides them?" "Only one." "Where is he?" "He is inside making a speech."

"An Old Settler Gone," read Dr. Bolus in the obituary columns of the local paper, and then he added, thoughtfully: "Well, Benks may have been an old settler in one sense, but he always managed to forget to settle with me."

Professor Cram calls a primrose "a corollinoral dicotyledonous exogen," but he wouldn't do it if the primrose was able to hit back. Some men are terribly overbearing towards the weak.

"You had better ask for manners than for money," said a dandy to a beggar. "I asked for what I thought you had most of," was the keen retort.

"Humph!" said the deacon, as he looked into the contribution box after passing it round—"Humph! This is rather a catch-penny affair!"

Teacher (to pupil)—"If you were president of a county fair and wanted a gate-tender, what would you do?" *Pupil*—"I'd boil it tender."

It may seem parodoxical, but it is nevertheless true, that floating debts will sink a corporation.

Is there any creature that has its toes behind? Yes, a tug; its tows are always behind.

The cowboy poet recently discovered in Wyoming is to be called the poet lariat.

A lawyer is not necessarily a sensible man because he always stands to reason.

A note of warning—People who steal watches are apt to wind up in jail.

The Baltimore folks think a bank teller is not always inclined to tell.

A question of time—The erection of public clocks.

A fallen star—A dismissed policeman.

Dead men's tales—Wills.

◆

CURRENT ITEMS.

Hiram Glass and Matthew Waggoner, brothers-in-law, living in Knox county, Ky., got into a difficulty about some cattle of Glass's getting into Waggoner's wheatfield. They were near Glass's house, when the trouble occurred, and Glass, running into his dwelling, got a pistol, and began to fire at Waggoner. The latter had his little boy with him, and drawing the child to his right side, he turned the left side to Glass, who kept firing, until Waggoner fell, mortally wounded. The reporter who described the scene says: "For one long, dreadful hour the doomed man lay, in rain and mud, within a few steps of Glass's door, being refused—even in a dying condition—admission to his slayer's house."

Anna Barker, a beautiful young lady of Port Fulton, Ind., was to have been married to a young man of the same place, but when the wedding day arrived the young man's father kept him away, and subsequently announced that the marriage should not take place. The young man being under age, his father, according to Indiana law, could prevent him from getting a marriage license. On hearing what her lover's father had determined upon, the young lady took a dose of poison, and died, after lingering in great agony for three hours.

Isaac Sinsabaugh fell in love with Lydia Cotton when they were school children together in Pennsylvania, sixty years ago. When they reached the age of ten years, their families were separated, the children lost trace of each other, and both in due time married. Mr. Sinsabaugh, for many years a widower, sought to trace out his first love, which he at last did, and, finding that she was a widow, he at once proposed to her, was accepted, and they were married a few weeks ago.

One day recently two brothers, Simon and William Schermerhorn, living near East Worcerter, N. Y., went hunting foxes. While Simon, who was sixty-five years old, was walking with his gun over his shoulder (the stock behind), he slipped, and throwing the gun in front of him, it was discharged as it struck the ground, and the contents passing through his heart, he fell dead. His brother was only a few rods from him when was killed.

Frank Leonard, of Bridgewater, Mass., aged eighteen, has been in the habit of carrying a pistol to protect himself against his father when under the influence of liquor. The other day, Frank ordered his younger brother, Frederick, to do something, and on his refusing to obey, Frank drew his pistol and fired at him. Frederick fell, and the bullet was found under his scalp, pressing on the skull. The wound, though painful, was not dangerous.

Addison Watrous, a prominent dry goods merchant, of Waverly, N. Y., lately committed suicide by shooting himself through the heart. He went to his store in the morning in apparently good spirits, and in a little while went up stairs to the carpet-room, as was his custom. Soon the report of a pistol was heard, and he was found lying on a couch in the throes of death, and died in a few minutes. There was no apparent cause for the deed.

One day last week, as Mrs. G. E. Turner, Mrs. Tyree, and Miss Rhodes were rowing in a boat at Kanawha Falls, W. Va., they were drawn under the falls, and their boat upset. Mrs. Tyree and Miss Rhodes were rescued, but the first died almost immediately, and Miss Rhodes was not expected to live. Mrs. Turner was drowned, and her body was not recovered.

Advices from Truxillo state that one of the construction boats of the Aguan Navigation Company, under command of C. A. Russell, formerly of New York city, an assistant superintendent, capsized during a squall at the entrance to the canal workings. All on board were saved excepting Russell, who was caught and eaten by a shark.

On Wednesday of last week, a seven-year-old granddaughter of Samuel H. Fox, of Fallowfield, Pa., while playing about the kitchen table, pulled over on herself a box half filled with concentrated lye. Some of the caustic went into the child's face, burning one eye out in a few hours, and rendering the other sightless in a couple of days.

Mrs. Edminster and her son, living six miles from Henry, Dakota, left that place for home, one day last week, with a horse and sleigh. A terrible storm came on, and two days afterwards they were found frozen to death ten rods from the house of one of their neighbors.

Two men, named Burhaus and Cragen, had an encounter with a large catamount near Brown's Station, in the Catskill Mountains, a few days ago. After a severe fight the catamount was killed.

ONLY A GIRL'S HEART.

A MYSTERY OF HADDON'S FERRY.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

CHAPTER XLIII.

GERTRUDE'S WARNING.

I conjure you by that which you profess,
Howe'er you came to know it, answer me.
SHAKESPEARE.

Let me gaze for a moment, that ere I die
I may read thee, lady, a prophecy. DAVIDSON.

And the lady's face ceased its play,
As if her first hair had grown gray;
Such things must begin, some day. BROWNING.

When Gerald Fitzgerald had left Gertrude sitting alone on the back seat of the coach, she supposed herself to be its only occupant; but she was quickly undeceived, for no sooner had his footsteps died away than a feeble voice from the darkest shadows of the opposite end spoke to her.

"Young lady—"

"Yes," said Gertrude, kindly, thinking that this voice must come from the black-cloaked woman whom they had found to be the only occupant of the coach when they entered it at Wildeville, and whose presence she had forgotten as soon as the shadows of night concealed her from sight.

"Have you a smelling-bottle about you?"

Gertrude took her eau-de-cologne from her bag and handed it to her fellow-traveller, saying:

"Only this."

"This will do," answered the woman, in a weak tone, adding: "Oh! I am so faint! I am so faint!"

"Are you sick? Can I do anything for you?" kindly inquired Gertrude.

"No, I am not sick. You can't do anything for me. But oh! I am so deadly faint—so deadly faint!" sighed the woman.

"Do let me call some of the men, then, to bring you a glass of wine from the house," persisted Gertrude, as she left her seat in the darkness, and climbed over the intervening cushioned benches until she reached the stranger. "Let me call one of the men," she repeated, taking the woman's hand.

"The men are all in the stable, child; not one of them within the sound of your voice. But oh! I am so faint—so deadly, deadly faint!" moaned the woman, dropping her head upon Gertrude's shoulder.

"Oh, I am so sorry! What can I do for you? Let me run to the house myself, then, and bring you a glass of wine," pleaded Gertrude, as she rubbed the hands of the woman in her own to restore what she believed to be impeded circulation. Let me run now to the house to get you something."

"No, no; I don't want anything. But, oh! I am so deathly, deathly faint!" gasped the woman, leaning more heavily upon the girl.

"Ah, good Heaven! what can be done?" exclaimed Gertrude, becoming alarmed for her fellow-traveller.

"I—I don't know. I think, maybe, if I could get out and walk a little in the fresh air," sighed the stranger.

"Do you think you are able to do so? Shall I help you?" inquired Gertrude.

"I—yes—I think I could get out—and walk—if you would help me. It is—this close coach—and—my cramped position—makes me faint," sighed the woman, as, resting her hands on Gertrude's shoulders, she raised herself from her seat.

"There, hold on to the strap until I can open the door and get out to help you down," said Gertrude, as she felt about in the darkness.

"Not that door—not the door next the house—the other one next the wood," panted the woman.

Gertrude felt her way to the other side of the coach and opened the door next the wood. She then got out, and carefully held her hand to her strange fellow-passenger, saying:

"Be *very* cautious. You are very weak, you know. Don't fall."

The stranger gave her hand to Gertrude, and descended from the coach with great care, and so stood safe upon the ground, saying:

"Thank you, young woman. You have, maybe, saved me from a swoon. But I give you so much trouble."

"Not the least. It is a real pleasure to help you, if I can," said Gertrude. "Now take my arm. Do not be afraid to lean heavily on me, for I am very strong."

"Thank y', honey; but I am twice as big and heavy as you are."

"You are much taller, certainly, but never mind that. Lean on me as heavily as you need to do. And now let us walk. We must not go many yards away from the coach, however, for fear we might keep them waiting," said Gertrude.

"Oh, this air feels so good! Already I am better. Let us walk to that pine wood. The odor of the pines always does me good," said the stranger, with a deep sigh of relief.

"But the wood is too distant. We must not go so far from the coach."

"Only a few yards. We shall get back in good time. Let me get one whiff of the pine wood's breath. It is the breath of life to me."

Gertrude looked toward the house. There seemed no sign of movement towards the coach from that direction. Besides, just then she heard a voice from some distance loudly call:

"What the deuce are they waiting for?"

And another voice shout back the answer:

"They are waiting for the boy with the mail-bag from Upperton. He's behind time, little rascal! Gone coon hunting, like as not."

"There!" said the woman. "Don't you hear? They are waiting for the Upperton mail which this coach must take. It may not be here for half an hour. The boy rides a wretched old nag, and may ha' broken down. Come along; they blow the horn to warn folks before they start, and even if we were in the woods we could hear it, and hurry back in time to save them from waiting."

"Oh, yes. So we could. I had forgotten about the horn. Come along, then, ma'am. I will take you to the woods. You are much better already, are you not?"

"Oh, yes, much stronger, thanky', honey! Every breath of this good fresh air revives me; and I know a whiff of the pine wood's odor will set me up entirely," said the stranger.

"Lean well on me, however. You must not fatigue yourself," kindly counseled Gertrude, as she drew the woman's hand farther through her own arm, and sought to give her all the support she could, as she led her across the turnpike-road and on to the pine wood, which they entered.

It was indeed the border of the old primeval forest. The trees were of gigantic height and enormous size. There was neither path nor undergrowth, and the unbroken ground was covered with thick grass, strewn here and there with a few fallen leaves and pine cones.

"This is the very sublimity of a forest!" exclaimed Gertrude, with enthusiasm.

"Ay, it is. The niggers call it 'the big woods,'" remarked the woman, seating herself at the foot of one of the mighty trees.

"You live about here, perhaps?" said the young girl.

"I live everywhere," answered the strange woman.

"You are always travelling, then?" said Gertrude, wondering whether her chance companion were a peddler.

"Always," answered the stranger; "but sit down here by me. The ground is quite dry."

Gertrude complied with her request.

At that moment the warning horn of the stage-coach was heard in a loud, shrill blast that rung through the forest.

"They call us! We must go!" exclaimed Gertrude, starting up.

But at that same instant an arm, strong as a giant's, was thrown around her, holding her down in a grasp close as a fetter, and the voice of the woman, no longer feeble, but strong and resonant, answered:

"You shall not go."

"How dare you? How dare you? You have deceived me. You were not sick—not faint. What do you mean? Let me go this instant," cried Gertrude, amazed, indignant, terrified beyond expression, as she struggled violently to free herself.

The woman answered nothing, but held her in a grip tight as a vice. The stage horn blew a long, long-resounding blast.

"Help! help! help!" screamed Gertrude, with all the strength of her lungs.

"Ha-ha-ha! They'll never hear that at this distance," laughed the woman.

"I know you now. You are Magdala. Oh, let me go. You would not keep me from my husband?" pleaded Gertrude, still struggling hard to free herself, and nearly maddened by the sound of the summoning horn that still rang through the forest.

But she might as well have tried to break a cable chain of iron as to burst the clasp of this strong amazon's arms.

She ceased to struggle, but continued to plead:

"Ah, Magdala, you will not keep me from my husband, you will not!"

"*Will I not?* I will keep you from Gerald Fitzgerald as I would keep you from a fire!" fiercely exclaimed Magdala.

"Why should you?" cried Gertrude, recommencing her violent effort to free herself. "Why, in the name of Heaven, should you wish to keep me from Colonel Fitzgerald? But why should I ask? Of course, she is crazy, and can give no reasons for her actions," added the girl, in an undertone.

The last long blast of the horn rang, reverberating through the forest.

"Oh, that horn! How can you hear it and hold me fast? Let me go! Let me go, I say! Help! help! help! Gerald! Gerald! Oh, Gerald, help!" screamed Gertrude, at the top of her voice.

"Ho! ho! ho! You make me laugh. Why, the sound of that horn would drown twenty voices like that. And even if the horn was not blowing, they couldn't be heard at this distance," chuckled the woman.

"How *dare* you hold me here?" cried Gertrude, renewing her struggles with frantic violence. "How *dare* you keep me from my husband?"

"Because you belong to *me*. Because you are *mine*. Because I will not let that handsome vampire have you, to suck your heart's blood," fiercely exclaimed Magdala.

"Heaven have mercy on me! I am in the grasp of a raving maniac!" exclaimed Gertrude, as her struggling muscles suddenly relaxed from their violent strain.

She had not fainted—that strong, healthy girl, brave as she was tender, had never fainted in all her life. It was the reaction from extreme tension that left her unnerved for a few moments.

Taking advantage of her condition, the amazon lifted her with powerful arms, and walked rapidly away into the depths of the forest. The sound of the stage-coach horn was no longer heard.

Magdala hurried on with the strength and persistence of madness, until she came to a little stream of water. With insane contempt of comfort, and regardless of wetting her garments, she waded through the stream to the other side, walked about a hundred yards, and sat down with her captive.

"Are you frightened?" whispered the woman, as she gathered the girl close to her bosom and held her fast.

"No, I am not so much frightened as pained," answered Gertrude.

"Yet the stage-coach has gone."

"I know it. I heard the wheels roll away about the time the horn stopped blowing, soon after we left the foot of the tree. I suppose we must have passed near the high road."

"We did; but we are far enough from the high road now. Are you frightened?"

"I tell you no—but pained—revolted."

"Yes, the stage-coach has gone, and Fitzgerald has gone with it to the city, and left you here."

"I do not believe that."

"You heard the stage go yourself."

"Yes, but Colonel Fitzgerald did not go with it. When he came out to the stage, and found that I was not there, he set about looking for me. He will be sure to find me. No, I am not frightened."

"I tell you, Fitzgerald entered the stage coach and went off with it. You call me mad; but I have a power that sane people lack. I can see things not to be seen by other eyes! I can know what is going on at a distance, and what will go on in the future! I saw Gerald Fitzgerald get into the stage-coach with a tumbler of spiced wine in his hand. I saw how carefully he carried it, for fear he should spill it."

"Well, he carried the wine for me, and when he found I was not there, he left the coach, of course. You must have seen that as well," said Gertrude, smiling, in spite of the difficulty of her position.

"No, I saw not that. The vision faded then. But look you!" exclaimed the woman, fiercely, while her dark eyes shone in the night, like the eyes of a panther. "Look you, Gertrude Fitzgerald! You *are* Fitzgerald, and you were Fitzgerald, long before you ever saw the face of Gerald Fitzgerald—look you! Before that handsome man shall have you— Oh! he may leave the coach; he may hunt you and find you! but before he shall take you, I myself—I!—will slay you with my hand, and send you to join your mother in the world of light! Aye! even if doing so I condemn my own soul to the pit of darkness!"

"Heaven of heavens!" muttered Gertrude, quailing.

"Do you know how I see you, with that man? I told you I could see the future. I can! I see you by that man's side, paling, fading, withering, unloved, deserted, even dishonored! I would rather see you dead, Gertrude, even if there were no after life!"

"In the name of Heaven I ask you: What am I to you, that you should take this strange, dangerous, fatal interest in my life?" demanded the girl.

"She asks me what she is to me?" muttered the woman to herself.

"Yes! I ask you what I am to you that you should treat me in the way you do?"

"You are all to me! My only hope of redemption, of forgiveness, of restoration!"

"You speak in riddles! But, oh! of course, I know you are mad," added Gertrude, in a low tone. "But what have you, even in madness, against a gentleman so pure and noble as Gerald Fitzgerald?"

"'So pure and noble' as Gerald Fitzgerald! Do you really love this man, then?" sneeringly inquired the woman.

Gertrude paused, trembled, and then loyally answered:

"I love Fitzgerald so much that even were your dark prophecy obliged to be fulfilled, only to be near him I would rather wither in his hand than bloom on the bosom of a king!"

The strange woman dashed Gertrude off her breast and sprang to her feet with a fierce gesture.

"This is godless idolatry!" she exclaimed. "This is not love, but godless idolatry! You call me mad? Why, you yourself are a million times madder than I! Where are you going?" she suddenly demanded, springing upon Gertrude, who was running away.

"I was going to try to find my way back to the post-house. You had better let me go, and make your own escape. You will get yourself into trouble by detaining me, you know," said Gertrude.

"You could not find your way back to the post-house to save your life. We are in a pathless forest, two miles from the post-house, and the night is dark as pitch. You must remain with me."

"You will get yourself into trouble by detaining me, I tell you."

"I am not afraid of anything that man or devil can do to *me*. All I fear is what he will do to you."

"*You* yourself are doing me more harm now than any other human being ever did, or ever could. The only palliation of your deed lies in your madness. I wonder if you are sane enough to tell me what you think of doing next," said Gertrude, gravely.

"I shall keep you here until morning; but I will not take my arm from around your waist again all night, for you are not to be trusted, you would try to run away again."

"What! sit out in the open air all night at this season of the year."

"Why not? It is dry and cool, but not cold, in this wooded vale between two mountains. A healthy girl like you will take no harm."

"But yourself?"

"I? I live in the open air. The mountains, woods and fields are the chambers of my habitation. How else could I have gained more powerful strength than most of your housed and pampered men possess? *You* have tried *that*, for you are no babe in weakness yourself," said the woman, significantly.

"No, my muscles have been trained at the oar," answered Gertrude, who comforted herself with the thought that if the madwoman intended to hold her there all night, her husband would certainly find her before morning; so that her curiosity was keener than her fear, as she inquired of her captor:

"When the night shall be over, what shall you do?"

"Eat breakfast," said the woman, producing a wallet that hung to a belt around her waist.

Gertrude laughed at this literal, practical, and most unexpected reply.

"You are not frightened, you?" exclaimed Magdala.

"No, not the least in the world *now*. I am only disturbed at the inconvenience to which your reckless act will have put Colonel Fitzgerald. But even that is not serious; for we were not in any desperate hurry to reach Washington. Now may I ask you if you mean to eat, drink and sleep in the woods?"

"Yes."

"And live in them forever?"

"No."

"What, then?"

"We will live in the woods until wind and rain, ice and snow, drive us into the deep caves of which these mountains are full; then we will live there. Ah! life is fine here in the forest among the winged creatures of the air and the four-footed ones of the earth."

Gertrude did not answer the maniac; she was wondering how long it would take her husband to follow her, trace her out, and find her.

At this moment the leaves crackled near her, and something rushed forward, jumped heavily into her lap, and began to caress her as if she had been a dear friend instead of a total stranger, and then suddenly jumped off again and bounded away, barking joyously.

It was the little brown Scotch terrier, the herald of her deliverers.

Magdala clasped Gertrude closely in her iron arms and sprang to her feet, gazing wildly around, as if uncertain whither to fly without falling into the hands of her pursuers, whose heavy tread was even now heard crunching through the dry fallen leaves. At the next instant two stalwart men were upon her—the one on the right, the other on the left.

"Oh, thank Heaven! you have come at last, Gerald! Don't let any one hurt the woman. She is mad, you know!" exclaimed Gertrude, who had now ceased to struggle.

"Release that lady instantly!" exclaimed the stern voice of Gerald Fitzgerald.

"Yes, I will release her! I will release her! Oh, yes, I will release her fast enough! Stand back, both of you, for a moment!" exclaimed Magdala.

And as the men withdrew a little, she, still holding her captive closely clasped in her left arm, put her right hand into her bosom, drew forth a small dagger, and—

Before she could strike it into Gertrude's heart her hand was seized by Gerald Fitzgerald, who had never taken his eyes from her, and the deadly weapon was wrenched from her grasp and hurled into the distant stream of water.

"Take her, then!" cried Magdala, wildly. "Take her, since I cannot keep her from you, and cannot even release her by death! Take her!"

Gerald received the half-fainting girl in his arms and sat down with her on the root of a fallen tree, and began to speak to her in soothing and encouraging words. But the fierce voice of Magdala drowned his tender utterances.

"Take her!" screamed the maniac—"take her! I give her to you! But to give her to you is not to release her, but to give her to a captivity worse than death—a captivity of soul and spirit as well as of body! But look you, Colonel Fitzgerald! You know *well* the power I possess over you! You will kill my child most likely by a more painful and protracted death than I could have inflicted on her; you will wear out her heart! But look you! I shall watch you both! And if under your baleful breath that pale face should grow one shade paler, YOUR SECRET—the secret that killed your father—the secret that would hurl you down to ruin and disgrace—shall be proclaimed from the house-tops; shall be given to the four winds of heaven! You are well warned!"

"Oh, Magdala, be silent!" cried Gertrude, by whom all this denunciation of her idol was heard as blasphemy and felt as torture.

"Do not mind her, love; she raves," said Colonel Fitzgerald, soothingly.

"Rave, do I?" screamed the woman—(and at that moment Mr. Simpkins turned the bull's-eye of his lantern full upon her, lighting up her wild, dark face, burning black eyes, and streaming black hair)—"Rave, do I? Listen to me, Gertrude Fitzgerald! Yes! Gertrude Fitzgerald, long before that man ever cast the 'evil eye' upon you, or dreamed of giving you a name that was your own already—listen! and I will give you a talisman, by which to test your false god! Ask Gerald Fitzgerald what that fell secret was that slew his father in his bed! Ask him how, and why, he was kept in Washington on his wedding-day; and why he never could explain the mystery to his forsaken bride! Ask him that, and see how he will answer you!" exclaimed the woman, with a triumphant flash of her wild, black eyes.

"Be sure that I shall ask my husband no such questions. I shall always respect and honor him too much for that," said Gertrude, as she still sat by Gerald's side on the root of the fallen tree.

"Poor child! And you call *me* a mad woman, not knowing your own state! But listen to me further. He—this strange god of yours—will break your heart and drive you to despair some day! You will find yourself alone, friendless, homeless, hopeless! Then, when you do, you will remember this conversation. Then go away by yourself; withdraw your mind from all visible things; fix it on me; call me, not aloud, but mentally; call me once, then wait a few seconds. If you feel no response, call me in the same way three times, and wait a little longer. If again you feel no answer, call me five times and wait five seconds. Still, if you feel no effect, call me seven times, very slowly. By that time you will surely feel my answer, and I will hurry to you, even from the uttermost parts of the earth! And he! he will call upon the mountains to fall upon him and cover his shame!" cried the wild woman, lifting her hands above her head, turning and striking into the depths of the forest.

"Colonel Fitzgerald, I am a constable. Hadn't I better run after that woman and take her up?" inquired Simpkins, after he had recovered the breath that had been suspended in amazement at the woman's conduct.

"No, let her go. She is mad," answered Gerald Fitzgerald, as he arose and gave his hand to Gertrude to help her on her feet.

"But, sir, I think it is my duty! Gracious goodness! she drew a dagger on the lady, and would have struck it into her bosom but for your timely spring! Heaven and earth! Assault and battery with intent to kill in my very presence! In the presence of a county constable! Whoever heard tell of such a thing! Sir, it is my duty to arrest her, and yours to prosecute her!" exclaimed Simpkins, swelling with importance.

"The woman is mad, Mr. Simpkins. She cannot be held responsible for anything she does or says," said the colonel, as he drew Gertrude's arm within his own, preparatory to taking her from the forest, and added:

"Shall we return to the house now? My wife needs rest, and we shall have to claim your hospitality for the night. Shall we go on?" inquired Colonel Fitzgerald.

"Certainly, certainly, sir. And I hope the women will have had sense enough to get some hot supper ready for the lady, though, bless my soul alive, it will be more like breakfast, for it must be long after midnight now. Yes, two o'clock, if you will believe me, sir," exclaimed the landlord, consulting his big silver timepiece. "I never was out of my bed at such an unholy hour in all the fifty years of my life. Not that I begrudge it, neither, so long as we have found the lady," he added, with a polite bow.

"We both thank you very much, Mr. Simpkins. And now, if you will be so good as to take the lantern and go on before, we will follow," said Colonel Fitzgerald.

"Yes; but how are you going to get back across the creek? You can't leap back as you leaped forward—not with the lady, you can't."

"No, I shall carry her across."

"What! and wade? The water is knee deep."

"That is nothing. I have been in deeper water, and deeper difficulties, too. Go on, Mr. Simpkins," said Gerald Fitzgerald, as he lifted Gertrude in his arms and prepared to cross.

"You will get so wet, Gerald," expostulated Gertrude.

"Yes, you will, sir. If anybody is to wade, you had better let me do it, sir. I have heavy bull-hide boots drawn up over my trousers, and I could take the lady across comfortably without wetting my skin," said the landlord.

"Yes, Gerald. Please let Mr. Simpkins carry me over, since he will be so good," added Gertrude.

"Thanks very much, Mr. Simpkins; but I think I prefer to carry this little lady over myself," said Gerald Fitzgerald, courteously. Then pressing Gertrude closer to his breast, he bent his head and whispered:

"My brave little girl, did you not get a wetting and risk a killing to bring me over the ferry some few weeks ago? Do you think I would not do half as much for you? Besides, do you think I will let any other arms than mine hold you so closely?"

She smiled with delight, and nestled even nearer to his bosom, just as a loving and guileless child might have done.

"Go on with the lantern, Mr. Simpkins, if you please," said the colonel.

"Just so, sir, since you say it," answered the landlord, as he walked down to the water's edge, took a step backward to gain momentum, and took a flying leap across the creek.

He landed safely on the other side, but his lantern swaying violently in his hand, put the candle out, and left them in total darkness.

Simpkins fumbled in his pockets for matches, found one, and re-lighted his candle just in time to see Colonel Fitzgerald wade into the water.

In a few moments the colonel also, with his pretty burden, was safe on this side.

CHAPTER XLIV.

GERTRUDE'S OVATION.

She gives thee all—she can no more—
Though poor the offering be,
Her heart, her heart is all the store
That she can bring to thee.
ANON.

"And now the sooner we get to the house the better, sir, for you are soaking wet up to your knees, I know," observed Mr. Simpkins.

"Do you feel able to walk the distance, my dear Gertrude? It is over two miles," inquired the colonel.

"Oh, yes; quite able to walk that, or twice the distance," replied Gertrude.

"Lead the way with your lantern, then, Mr. Simpkins," said Gerald Fitzgerald, as he drew Gertrude's arm within his own.

The landlord walked on before, keeping the narrow path in retracing their steps through the forest. Gerald Fitzgerald and Gertrude followed at a distance of a few feet behind.

This enabled them to converse confidentially, while keeping the light of the lantern carried by Simpkins well in sight.

"Now tell me, Gertrude, how it happened that you left the stage-coach, after declaring to me that you were unwilling to do it?" inquired Colonel Fitzgerald.

"You are not displeased or angry with me, Gerald?" inquired Gertrude, in a low voice.

"Of course I am displeased, Gertrude—how could I be otherwise?—but not angry with you, child. Tell me all about it," answered the husband, gravely.

The young wife sighed, almost imperceptibly, and answered by giving a short, simple, but perfectly clear account of the deception practiced upon her judgment, and the appeal made to her sympathies by the pretended invalid.

Her husband heard her in silence, and when she had concluded, he said:

"If my little Gertrude has any faults or weaknesses, they lie in her excessive tenderness and trustfulness. Let this be a grave warning to you, my child, to be more guarded in your conduct. Your honor and your life were both endangered to-night."

"I will be more guarded, Gerald. I know my life was endangered; but my *honor*, Gerald?" she inquired, with a look of amazement.

"Yes, Gertrude. The forest is the haunt of runaway negroes and other desperate characters. No young woman could be safe in passing through it unprotected even by day, much less so by night."

"But I was protected from everybody but herself—by Magdala."

"Magdala is a woman of tremendous muscular power, quite able to manage you as easy as you could manage a canary-bird, but she could not have withstood the strength and frenzy of a stalwart negro. Let us talk no more of this, Gertrude. I spoke only to warn you."

"I am warned, dear Gerald. I will be more cautious from this day forth. But you? Did you miss me as soon as you got back to the coach?"

"No, dear, I was the only remaining passenger in the inside of the coach. It was pitch-dark. The horses started just as I dropped into my seat, and went off at a very great speed to make up for lost time, while I was groping about in the shadows for you, supposing that you had your position and fallen asleep; and they had taken the coach half a mile from the post-house before I had discovered your absence, and succeeded in making the stage-driver hear me and stop the coach."

"Oh, Gerald! And you must have had so much trouble to find me! But I knew you would find me. I knew you would, because you would never stop until you did. Tell me all about the trouble you had, dear Gerald."

"What? Fight my battle all over again, little girl? Well, I will, since you wish it," said Colonel Fitzgerald, good-humoredly, and he commenced and told Gertrude about his dismay at missing her, his return to the post-house, the search of the premises, the subsequent search of the back-yard, the garden, shrubbery, orchard, vineyard and negroes' quarters, the disappointment, the return to the house, and finally of the forlorn hope, in which the little Scotch terrier, Nelly, was conscripted to act the part of a detective to discover the missing lady—a duty which she so successfully accomplished.

"Behold all!" said Fitzgerald, smiling.

"I will never give you so much inconvenience again as long as I live, Gerald," said Gertrude, earnestly.

"That is a long promise, little girl," he answered, as he took the hand that lay upon his and pressed it tenderly.

"That poor madwoman, Gerald! Has she no friends—no home?" inquired Gertrude.

"She has a friend in every Christian in the county, and a home in every house as long as she will be contented to stay. You heard the charges she made against me, Gertrude?" inquired Fitzgerald.

"Oh, yes; but she is mad, you know, and you will forgive her, Gerald."

"You did not suspect those charges had any foundation in truth, did you, Gertrude?"

"I?" she exclaimed, stopping short, and gazing up into his face, as if she could have seen it in the deep darkness, for the bull's-eye of Simpkins's lantern, carried a few feet in advance, shone only on the path before them; but her tone was more expressive than a dozen protestations could have been.

"No, Gertrude, you do not believe that there was any foundation for the charges she made against me, and yet, my child, *there was*."

Again she stopped short, and looked up into his shadowed face in amazement.

"Yes, Gertrude, there is a secret connected with our family, the hearing of which gave my father his death-blow. I do not know what that secret was, for my unhappy father died in the bitter struggle to reveal it to me—died before he had even communicated the nature of that secret to me," said Fitzgerald, gravely and sorrowfully.

"But, dear Gerald, though that secret may concern your family, and through them, affect you, yet you are in no way responsible for it, whatever it may be," said Gertrude, earnestly.

"No; but here is another secret—cast up to me by that mad woman to-night! the secret of the circumstances which detained me in Washington, on the appointed wedding day, when I was bound in honor to present myself at the Summit Manor House. This secret, of course, I do know, yet I dare not reveal. What do you think of that, Gertrude?" he asked, once more taking her hand in his, as it lay upon his arm.

She paused a few moments, and then, speaking clearly, answered:

"I do not know what I think about your secret, dear Gerald; but this I know—that if it were right to reveal that secret you would reveal it, and should it be revealed the revelation could only reflect honor upon you, since all you do is honorable, and in harmony with that fine old legend of your house that I love so well:

"'The Geraldines! the Geraldines!
'Tis full a thousand years
Since mid the Tuscan vineyards
Bright flashed their battle spears!
But never, then, nor thence, nor now,
Has falsehood or disgrace
Been seen to soil Fitzgerald's plume,
Or mantle in his face!'"

Gertrude quoted these lines in a low, fervent voice, and he felt the electric touch that thrilled her sensitive form as she spoke.

"Little enthusiast!" he said, in a grave and tender tone. "I wish I were fully worthy of that old name and fame, for then, perhaps, I might be half worthy of your love and faith."

As he spoke they arrived at the post-house, and found Mrs. Simpkins and Becky and Sallie waiting up for them in the parlor. They received the returning party with great excitement expressed on all their faces, but only manifested in speech by the elder woman, who exclaimed:

"Well, indeed, and have you got back at last? The dog has been home an hour. Did she lead you to the lady, or did you find her yourselves? And is that the lady there? And where did you come across her at last? And what made her go off so far?"

"Goodness gracious me alive! Margaret, stop and take breath! I can't keep the run of all your questions, much less answer them. These travellers want some supper. Have you got any for them?" demanded the landlord.

"Yes, to be sure. I knew, whether you found the lady or not, you would want something to eat when you got back—you and the gentleman, too. Men always want to eat, on all occasions, and at all hours, whether it is a wedding, or a funeral, or an auction, or a trial, day and night. Would you like to go to a bed-room first, and lay off your things, ma'am?" she said, suddenly turning to her lady guest.

"If you please," said Gertrude.

"Come, then," said the landlady, leading the way from the parlor across the front passage to a large, clean, plainly-furnished chamber on the same floor.

Gertrude laid off her woolen hood and heavy shawl, and then went to the plain pine-wood wash-stand and bathed her face and hands.

Afterwards, when she was brushing her hair before the white dimity-draped dressing-table, the landlady attempted to interview her on the subject of her mysterious disappearance.

"I reckon you are a young, inexperienced traveller, honey, or you never would run the risk of leaving the coach by yourself and walking off so far! It's a mercy you wa'n't lost altogether, and didn't come acrost some of them runaway niggers. Whatever could a put it in your head to go so far in the night, honey?"

Now almost any other woman, under similar circumstances, would have resented the question of the landlady as impertinent curiosity; but not so our meek Gertrude. She answered frankly by telling the inquisitive hostess all the particulars of her adventure with the mad woman, in which she herself alone was concerned. She felt neither free nor willing to speak of Magdala's bitter hatred and extravagant accusations of Gerald Fitzgerald.

"Well, honey, you must be more careful another time, that's all I can tell you; for this here adventur' of yours might have cost you your life, or worse! And it's my firm belief that you owe your deliverance from danger and death to my little dog, Nelly," said the hostess, emphatically.

"Bless little Nelly!" exclaimed Gertrude. "I wish there were some way of rewarding a little dog, besides the poor one of giving her something to eat."

"Would you like to have little Nelly for your own little dog, honey?"

"Oh, indeed I should."

"Well, then, you can have her, and welcome."

"Oh, thank you so much. But I would not like to take her away from you, and, besides, she would be home-sick."

"Oh, as to taking her away from me, I have more dogs, little and big, than I know what to do with; and as to her being home-sick, Nelly is only six months old, and will soon forget us and take to you."

"Then I will take her and love her; and, oh, I thank you so much. But will you let me give you something—not for *her*, you understand, *she* is your free gift, but something of mine that you may remember me by? See here, will you please to wear this for my sake?" said Gertrude, detaching a pearl brooch from her bosom and fastening it on the blue ribbon bow that adorned the landlady's neck.

"Well, I declare, that *is* handsome. My girls will both want to take it away from me; but they sha'n't have it, that is certain. Thanky', honey. I will keep it as long as ever I live," exclaimed the delighted landlady, rapturously kissing the donor. "Come now, honey. I reckon supper's on the table, and men are *that* impatient. Ah, you've got to learn that yet, honey. You're a young bride, and a young bride is like a young bear, with all her troubles afore her," concluded the landlady, as she led the way back to the parlor, and the whole party went into the dining-room, where a comfortable repast was served.

Immediately after supper, our travellers retired to rest.

And so ended the strange, adventurous wedding-day of Gerald Fitzgerald and Gertrude Haddon.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

MISS TAFT'S LEGACY.

Miss Taft was waiting in the doctor's front office for Dr. More to come in. She was a rich lady, still by courtesy called young. Her money was all her own, and she had more than she knew how to spend. Perhaps, if she had been poorer she would not have had so many mysterious afflictions—a pain here and a pain there; a trouble in her chest; a queer feeling in her back.

Every week she called the doctor or went to him, and swallowed nearly as much medicine as she did food. As for lotions and salves, she had bottles and pots and jars enough to start an apothecary.

This time her little finger felt queer, and she had dropped in and was waiting for Dr. More with some impatience, when she heard him enter the back parlor. The doors were drawn, but she expected them to open in a moment, being unaware that the servant had gone across the street to speak to a friend at a doorway, and had not notified the doctor of her presence.

In the little village where Miss Taft had spent her life, the doctor prepared his own medicines, and was his own druggist. And the assistant was pounding something in a mortar when the doctor spoke to him.

"Williams!"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you mix the licorice and water?"

"Yes, sir."

"Put this label on it. Miss Taft is sure to come in this week."

"But you don't give her licorice and water for everything, do you?" asked the assistant.

"Different flavoring," said the doctor. "Miss Taft is an excellent woman, but there is nothing in the world the matter with her. If I were to tell her so she would only go to Dr. Bolus, and he might kill her. I need my fees. She is rich. It does not hurt her, and I take care that she sha'n't be injured. Not highly conscientious, I know, but I must live."

The assistant laughed.

"I'll not betray you," he said, and the pounding went on.

Miss Taft, boiling with rage, advanced towards the folding-door. Then she felt that her face was flushed, and remembered that when she lost her temper she also forgot her dignity; so she quietly turned into the hallway and out into the street.

"I will write him a note," she said—"a note that shall crush him with shame, and I will never go to him again."

As she hurried along many people nodded or bowed to her, for she was very popular, and on one corner she met the minister's wife.

"Fresh as a rose, I declare, Miss Taft," this lady cried, "with all the town sick. I believe it must be Dr. More who keeps you so well. Bolus has all his patients on their backs. It's a pity he gets so many. More is such a careful man, and yet, they tell me, can barely live. His assistant tells dreadful stories of his struggles. Speak well of him at the Browns', won't you? If they'd change I think Mrs. Brown would improve. Such terribly strong medicines won't do for everybody."

"Those Dr. More certainly does not give," said Miss Taft. Then she found herself laughing. A sense of humor is a great help to the temper. The funny side of the picture was presented to her.

"Licorice water, indeed!"

Salt and water once she felt sure; rose water another time; sugar and vanilla before that. Oh! it was funny. And she had measured and dropped so carefully, and kept her eye on the clock, taking her doses as precisely as if life depended on it. By the time she reached home her ideas had changed. She took from the shelf a great volume of somebody's "Family Medicine," and read the symptoms of small-pox carefully. *Then she threw a shawl about her, and lay down upon a sofa,* and sent a servant for Dr. More.

"Tell him to run," she said, maliciously; she knew he had no gig.

The doctor came. I am afraid he did not run, but he was prompt; and Miss Taft, who had managed to grow grave, described every symptom of small-pox, adding that she thought she *had been* exposed to the infection on the cars during a late journey.

The doctor was alarmed, but puzzled.

"Your pulse seems all right," he said. "You really surprise me; but I will send you something."

He did. For a week he came every day; then Miss Taft declared herself well.

A few days after she had symptoms of yellow fever—if her word was to be believed.

For some time the doctor came regularly, as before. Indeed, from that time he never knew when Miss Taft would send for him—at dawn and at dusk, at noon and at midnight, from his bed in coldest winter, from his dinner when he was hungriest. Finally he decided that she was actually a mad-woman; but she paid her bills promptly, paid for all the medicines, and was always asking for more.

This went on for years. At last, at the age of eighty, Dr. Bolus, with many murders on his unconscious old soul—for he really thought himself a wonderful physician—retired from practice.

Naturally the families thus saved called in Dr. More. His income thus increased. He married, and was spoken of as a rising man. But Miss Taft never failed him. She was always sending for him. She sent for him, he should forever remember, on his wedding-day. They were the best of friends always, but somehow she regarded him as a joke, and would sometimes laugh at him as he departed.

Long, long years went by. One day Miss Taft did not send for him. That night the maid-servant who waited on her entered his office in tears.

"I came without being told," she said. "Miss Taft didn't get up to-day, and won't eat or drink."

The doctor hurried to the house. He went to Miss Taft's bedside, and took her hand.

"My dear lady, you are really sick this time," he said.

A little hoarse laugh answered him. He thought he heard her say:

"Licorice water won't do now."

Dr. More did his best, but Miss Taft died that night. He mourned her sincerely. He wished he had not humored her fancies, yet felt that perhaps she might have fared worse if he had not.

Miss Taft, without relatives, and dying very rich, had made her will. She left the bulk of her property to a widows' home, a legacy to her maid, smaller ones to her other servants, and ended with this clause:

"To Dr. Manuel More I leave the contents of the six great chests in the garrets. He will open them in the presence of the assemblage who hear this will read. Mr. Boll, the lawyer, will unlock them. No. One first."

Surprise seized all.

The garret stairs were climbed. Six great hair trunks of immense size, and very, very old, stood in a row. They were marked, "Taft," in brass nails, and numbered in the same way.

Mr. Boll unlocked number one.

The contents were covered with a cloth. On the cloth lay a letter.

"DEAR DOCTOR: Thirty years ago I was in your office when you were not aware of it, and heard a conversation between yourself and your assistant, Mr. Williams. By this I learnt your method of prescribing for me. From that day to this I have called you in constantly, but I have never had a single day of real illness. In these trunks you will find everything you ordered me untouched, all the bottles, jars, pots and pill boxes unopened. I have repaid your trick by another; but you will forgive me, for I always paid my fees. Mr. Boll will open the other trunks before all present."

The doctor, albeit a little flushed and tremulous, bore the ordeal bravely until the sixth trunk was opened.

In it were the title deeds of property that made him a rich man, and these words on the envelope that contained them:

"FOR DR. MANUEL MORE, my dear old friend, who will forgive me my bit of fun, as I forgave his, thirty years ago."

Then he broke down and wept.

◆

—It is not what men doubt, but what they believe with mind and might, the faiths they assimilate and reproduce in conduct and character, that save them from sin and make them strong to do and endure.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1887.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber unless he gives us his *former* as well as his present address.

OUR TERMS TO SUBSCRIBERS FOR 1887.—POSTAGE FREE.

Single copies, $3 per annum; four copies, $10, which is $2.50 a copy; eight copies, $20, *postage free*. The party who sends us $20 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Those who get up clubs, in their respective towns, can afterward add single copies at $2.50. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. When a draft or money order, or Express money order, can conveniently be sent it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. Remember that the postage on the *Ledger* to all parts of the country will be paid by us, so that our subscribers will have no postage to pay.

☞ We employ no travelling agents. Address all communications to

ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Debtors and Creditors.

The common feeling respecting debtors and creditors is often erroneous, and, as is common with fallacies, it affects with double force the young and inexperienced. Debtors are represented in the ordinary language of a large portion of society as a set of amiable, unfortunate, and most interesting persons. Creditors, on the other hand, are represented as execrable wretches, with a hardness of heart that would disgrace the executioner.

The debtor may be an amiable and interesting person, for we often find these characteristics united in him; but the young must beware how they set down debtors, as a class, as purely estimable and entitled to sympathy, while they at the same time look upon creditors as only ruthless persecutors.

Creditors are not invariably rich, as one might suppose them to be. They are more frequently poor, industrious persons, who, in losing money by their debtors, are apt to be made debtors themselves, and thereby ruined. In fact, the case stands generally thus:—An idle or extravagant person procures the means of gratifying his bad appetites, and is enabled to show himself off as a very fine fellow, at the expense of an honest man, who confines himself constantly to his business, and denies himself almost every indulgence, in order that he may be able to pay every one to whom *he* is indebted. Now, if young people will bring their naturally generous feelings to bear upon this point, they will see that the debtor, and not the creditor, is at fault. And they may be assured, that where creditors show a severity to their debtors, it is generally either merited by the latter, or is dictated by a justifiable consideration of the danger into which creditors are thrown by the non-payment of the money which is due them.

HENRY WARD BEECHER is dead; and in his death the world has lost the greatest genius of the age. His brilliant and noble traits of character won for him the admiration and affection of mankind; and his death will be mourned in all civilized lands.

For over fifteen years Mr. BEECHER was a contributor to the *Ledger;* and in a future number we shall publish some extracts from the hundreds of characteristic letters that we received from him during that period. These letters, which were written with all the freedom of personal friendship and on all manner of subjects, show what an unrivalled genius—a man of great head and heart—he was.

A Stiff-Necked Autocrat.

The Czar of Russia, who is a man of enormous size and stature, is said to be able to "break an ordinary horseshoe with his hands alone." He is described (by a St. Petersburgh correspondent) as a very temperate man, a model husband, an affectionate father, and a lover of honest men, but inflexibly determined to maintain intact the absolute power which he inherited from his father. He "will not admit the least concession to the spirit of the age." Such a man was PAUL, the great-grandfather of the present Czar, who was assassinated in his palace by a band of nobles. He, too, was a stubborn giant, and was murdered on account of his obstinacy.

◆

Why Did They Buy Them?

Mayor Hewitt says that he has "a houseful of bric-a-brac and works of art that he would be glad to get rid of," and that many other New York people have valuable collections which they are "nearly through with."

Why did these people buy these works of art if they are so anxious to get rid of them? According to our experience in this world, a man is never eager to get rid of anything which he really appreciates. But if he accumulates collections of bric-a-brac and pictures from the mere snobbish love of display, then we can understand how he would, after a time, get tired of them.

◆

The Lady of the White House.

The wife of the President enjoys extraordinary popularity in Washington. It is not her beauty alone that enchants the crowd, nor even her agreeable manners. She is felt to be a good-hearted and high-minded lady, who takes pleasure in giving pleasure, and has the tact which good nature inspires of never wounding the self-esteem of others by an ill-chosen word or an ill-timed silence. As the French people say, she "knows how to please."

◆

Distance Annihilated.

The telephone is working well between Paris and Brussels, cities nearly three hundred miles apart. For a charge of fifty-five cents, a person in one of them can converse for five minutes with a friend in the other. The queen of the Belgians hears the operas performed at Paris, while she sits at her ease in her palace at Brussels, and, some days ago, the Belgian king held a long conversation with the President of France by telephone. This is both convenient and wonderful.

OWEN GRIFFITH'S CAREER.

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D.D., LL.D.

Reader, did you ever see North Wales? No? Well, you have missed a pleasure, for its glens and hills, its valleys and its picturesque towns, its Bethesdas and Mizpahs where the preachers give the best teaching and Sabbath schools that are unique assemble, its quarries and its farms wrought—both of them—by singularly intelligent people, present as inviting a field for the tourist as Europe can furnish. Among surroundings like these Owen Griffith saw the light, grew up, went to school and then to his father's trade. Clondwillyn quarry had a high reputation, and not only English, but other town corporations were glad to pay good prices for its well-cut hard stones wherewith to pave their streets. Contracts had sometimes to be hurried up, and the owners imposed long hours with but a small additional pay, and discontent grew up among the men.

Many of them could not read English, and Owen, partly from his youth and partly from his education, which was above the average, was the means of communication between them and English papers in which workmen's troubles and efforts were reported. In the summer evenings, and at the meal hours, Owen might be seen, with a group of workmen about him, rendering into vigorous Welsh the reports of speeches in the interests of labor. That he should catch the spirit of the movement, and that the men, hardly used, as they thought themselves, should see in this direction the hope of relief for them, was not unnatural. They had not studied political economy. They had studied the prices of tea, beef, and beer, and they had a vague, exalted notion of the profits the Messrs. Davies were getting out of their labor. Accordingly, communication was opened with a union in the nearest English county, Owen being the secretary, and, at the age of twenty, the leader of the "labor party" at Clondwillyn quarries.

Visits were paid by agents of the Union; at their suggestion demands were made upon the Messrs. Davies for higher wages and shorter hours. The explanation was given that contracts had been made on the basis of present wages, that they would be a dead loss if these demands were met, and that it was only on the present scale that they could compete with the people around Penmanmaur and Penmanbach, who had only to let their stones slide down the hill into the schooners that carried them to their destination. The English agents pronounced the reply unsatisfactory and ordered a suspension.

The "hands" accordingly stopped work. Messrs. Davies tried to supply their places, but it was hard to bring and accommodate new men—the old hands occupied and mostly owned the cottages around—and the result was failure to make good their contracts and the stoppage of their works. Great suffering followed, notwithstanding the slender allowance made from the English Union. Many of the people had to move away, and when the Messrs. Davies sold their quarry at a loss to a new firm, managed by a Scotchman, the old hands found they could be dispensed with, and were glad to get to work on less than their original terms. Mr. Dunwoody had probably heard of Owen as a leader in the former troubles, and somehow never had a vacancy for him in the re-organized works.

In these circumstances a man does not see things clearly, but in the light of his own grievances. Owen was indignant, quitted the place, went to the Black Country, and turned to such account his Welsh eloquence that he was employed as an agent. His pictures of rich oppressors, of idle capitalists, of gorgeous palaces decorated and enriched with the money which should have put common comforts into poor men's cabins, and his denunciations of "companies without consciences" were very effective. He never failed to "bring down the house" at a point where he pictured a President who did not know hard coal from soft, but who drove his carriage, and, as the poet says,

> "Through life's dark road his sordid way he wends,
> An incarnation of fat dividends."

But Owen had the religious training of a North Wales boy, and there were lengths he could not go in the movement. So he saved what he could; he got a place in an office where his English and Welsh made him useful, and where the Union movement did not extend, and in five years he had money enough to warrant the raising of the question: "Can I go into business for myself?" The house in which he served had American connections. He got an introduction to correspondents in Pennsylvania. He had a little capital; he had much acquaintance with workmen's ways; he had practical knowledge, gathered in Wales and the Black Country, which served good purposes in the United States; and at the age of forty Owen was the working and practical man of a firm with about one hundred and twenty hands under it. The experience of by-gone years was not lost on him. His early training had laid the foundation of a good thorough character. His mind had come to work on two sides of a hard problem. He had been a fiery speaker on one side, and he still had honest sympathy with the working man. He had not been long in Pennsylvania till he saw that the "intermittent fevers," with which he had been familiar in England and Wales, were being imported, and he prepared for them.

Getting the men together in groups in a small reading-room the firm had erected, he talked with them about the amount of money spent on beer, on tobacco, and on stronger luxuries. He would figure out on a blackboard the amounts, winding up with a speech like this: "Now, men, two years of that cash—there you have the dollars and cents—would give each of you a share in the firm." The result was a new Savings Bank, and in less than a year Tim O'Callahan, who had the finest saloon in the little town, and would have run for mayor if the village had been a city, moved off to Pittsburg. His place was taken, altered into a school-house, and Mr. Griffith himself saw that every child of the hands of proper age was in it. Mrs. Griffith was an American lady—the best "piece of stock," Mr. Griffith said, he ever had, always "above par," and her only drawback inability to speak Welsh. She had lived in a city where kindergartens and sewing schools, taught by ladies, were in vogue, and she was, in less than three months, at the head of a splendid "sewing school" each Saturday morning, including every workingman's girls in the place.

There was a piece of ground running along the hillside, too high for crops, but nicely shaded by the "mountain," as they called a picturesque eminence of seven or eight hundred feet. There was great speculation among the men as they saw this being measured out, divided, streets graded, drains made, and a model cottage go up at the further end of it. One day there was a special meeting called at the reading-room, and Mr. Griffith solved the mystery by explaining the terms on which workmen could have their own houses on these lots, and in periods running from one to three years be absolute owners of them. Plans would cost them nothing. The men cheered him, and in less than a year there was as nice a street as you would see in a New England town, and nearly every garden had the beginning of a flower-bed and a few most hopeful-looking evergreens—the gift of Mrs. Griffith.

A bigger building, meanwhile, had gone up in the village, in which the young spent Sunday morning at school, and were joined by their parents for worship a little later. The Sunday-school room only needed a change of chairs to accommodate the readers, for the "reading-room" had become too small, and was now a "dispensary," where Dr. Fraser spent two hours a day for consultation and medicine, for which there was a moderate payment. Mr. Griffith explained, in the reading-room, just how much it would cost, and the basis on which they could have all they needed without loss of self-respect.

When the agent of the Union visited the works, and saw the men, he was discouraged; but Mr. Griffith heard of his presence, insisted on his coming to dinner, going over the whole place, and addressing the men in the evening. His report at headquarters was: "Griffith is a splendid fellow; the men believe in him; and I don't see that anything could be done there."

◆

The Colors of Eyes.

There is some reason for the admiration generally felt for blue eyes. A connoisseur in eyes states that nine-tenths of the railroad men, pilots, and others who are selected for their keenness and correctness of vision, have blue eyes. Brown eyes are beautiful. Gray eyes usually denote intelligence, and hazel eyes a talent for music. The commonest color of eyes is gray, and the rarest violet.

THREE HEROINES OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY JAMES PARTON.

Some documents, recently brought for the first time to public notice, recall to remembrance a Revolutionary heroine whose name is unfamiliar to most readers. These documents, which are three in number, lie in the State-House of Pennsylvania, and the woman whose fame they preserve was Margaret Corbin, wife of a cannoneer in General Washington's army.

The first of the three papers is a letter from Mr. Scull, secretary at the war office, to John Jay, President of Congress, and inclosed within it is the second—a recommendation from the Council at Philadelphia.

"SIR"—so runs the letter addressed to John Jay—"The inclosed recommendation of the Council of Pennsylvania in favor of Margaret Corbin, added to many circumstances which appear to support her petition for relief, induce the Board to offer a resolution which they think her peculiar situation merits. As she had fortitude and virtue enough to supply the place of her husband after his fall in the service of his country, and in the execution of that task received the dangerous wound under which she now labors, the Board can but consider her as entitled to the same grateful return which would be made to a soldier in circumstances equally unfortunate. They therefore beg leave to report:

"That Margaret Corbin, who was wounded and disabled in the attack on Fort Washington, whilst she heroically filled the post of her husband, who was killed by her side serving a piece of artillery, do receive during her natural life, or the continuance of such disability, the one-half of the monthly pay drawn by a soldier in the service of these States; and that she now receive out of the public stores one complete suit of soldier's clothing, or the value thereof in money."

The inclosed letter from the Council recites the same facts, and mentions, furthermore, that Mrs. Corbin was "utterly disabled," and that, notwithstanding the rations which had been allowed her, she was not provided for as her helpless condition really required. A note adds that the Council had given thirty dollars to relieve her necessities until she could be assisted in a regular and permanent manner.

The attack on Fort Washington, during which this brave woman earned her right to gratitude and honorable maintenance from her country, was one of the fiercest of the lesser engagements of the Revolution. The post—a fortification erected upon a hill a short distance out of New York—was held, after the occupation of the city by the British, against the desire and judgment of General Washington, who foresaw that a successful defence of it with the numbers then available for the purpose would be an impossibility. On the sixteenth of November, 1776, when British and Hessians swarmed to the attack, the result was not long doubtful. The Americans made the most of their advantage in position, and their three cannon, served rapidly and well, did great execution. Again and again the Hessians tried to take this little battery, clambering up the steep face of the hill below it on their hands and knees, or pulling themselves up by clinging to boughs and bushes.

The fight at this point was hottest, longest and most desperate; and here it was that Margaret Corbin acted a soldier's part. From the beginning of the struggle she had exposed herself to the enemy's fire, keeping close to her husband and assisting him in his duties. In the midst of his work, when the battle was but half done, a ball pierced his heart, and he fell dead at her feet. Silently, and without an instant's hesitation, the widow stepped across his body and took his place at the gun. It cost the Hessians three hours of bloody work to carry the position. During half of that time Margaret Corbin was fighting in her husband's place as coolly, bravely and steadily as any man in the fort, never ceasing her labor until she fell to the ground, terribly wounded by three grapeshot in the shoulder.

With the surrender of the fort she fell into the hands of the enemy. A wounded woman could be but an encumbrance to them, and she was allowed to return to her friends as soon as she was able to do so. Congress, in the midst of its overwhelming difficulties with matters of war and of finance, was not ungrateful, and in 1780 the Board of War confirmed to her the half-pay already granted, and ordered that the soldier's suit, or its value, previously mentioned, should also be received by her "annually during her natural life," the extent of her disability having by that time been ascertained. One arm was useless, and she was otherwise so injured as to be an incurable and almost helpless cripple.

No more than this is known of her. There were no reporters in those days to describe her person, her manners, and the circumstances of her daily life. What she did in the service of her country, and how her country rewarded her, we know, and we know no more.

With somewhat more accompaniment of detail and description, yet in much the same abrupt way, another heroine of the Revolution, wife of another cannoneer, flashes across the scene of history and disappears. She was commonly known as "Captain Molly." The first mention of her name occurs in an account of the capture of Fort Clinton. Here, after a retreat had been ordered and the cannoneers had turned away from their guns, the wife of one of them, a young Irishwoman, was observed to run back, pick up the match which he had dropped, and apply it to the touch-hole, sending a cannon-shot—the last fired from the fort—crashing into the enemy's ranks at close range. Then, just as they were scaling the ramparts, she, too, turned and raced back after her husband.

She was evidently half a soldier by disposition, as she was attached to the camp, and went with her husband wherever his regiment was ordered. She understood his duties as well as he did himself, and often assisted him in discharging them. It was her ordinary custom to wear, over the plain full petticoats then commonly worn by women, an artilleryman's uniform coat, and to perch a military cocked hat on the top of her shock of red hair. She is further described as being twenty-two years of age, possessing a fine, vigorous figure, abundant freckles, and a pair of blue Irish eyes, full of fire and audacity.

Her bit of bravado at Fort Clinton was a mere prelude to the real service which she rendered nine months later, on the unfortunate field of Monmouth. The day was intensely hot, and during the fight, Molly, at much personal risk, busied herself in bringing water from a spring near by to her husband and the other thirsty gunners. As she was returning from one of these trips, she saw him shot dead at his post. No man competent to replace him was present, except those already working at the other guns. The officer in command ordered the piece he had been serving to be withdrawn. Molly also heard this order. Dropping the pail of water which she carried, she seized the rammer and springing to the gun, vowed with the brief but moving eloquence inspired by the occasion and her nationality, that she would fill her husband's place, and do her best to avenge his death. She kept her word, fighting with a skill and daring that won the admiration of all who saw her, and maintaining her position until the line in which she served was driven back by an irresistible charge of cavalry.

She passed the night upon the field, and the next morning, her hands still discolored with powder, and her dress torn, dirty, and stained with blood, she was presented to General Washington, who was so pleased with her courage that he commissioned her a sergeant. This military title, however, she never bore, being already popularly brevetted "*Captain* Molly." She was a favorite with the French officers, who delighted in making her presents and would occasionally fill her cocked hat with silver crowns. By General Washington's recommendation, she was placed upon the list of half-pay officers for life. A short time after the day of her widowhood and her glory she left the army, and retired to live and die peacefully among the Highlands of the Hudson.

As interesting as that of either Captain Molly or Mrs. Corbin, and far more singular, was the career of a young woman named Deborah Sampson, a descendant of Governor William Bradford, of Plymouth. At the time of the war she was an orphan, bound by no close ties of kindred, and living at the house of a friend of her parents. She was, in 1781, eighteen years of age, well educated, of an active and intelligent mind, and an unusually vigorous physique. She was ardently patriotic, and, like Shakespeare's Rosalind, "more than common tall"—five feet seven inches and a half. This latter fact doubtless suggested to her, as it did to Rosalind, that she might successfully conceal her sex in male attire. Her first thought was to enlist as a sailor before the mast on board a privateer. She abandoned this idea, however, and in the month of April, with hair cut short and dressed as a man, she left her home at night and went to Bellingham, where she enlisted as a soldier, put on the Continental uniform, and was sent, with other recruits, to West Point. Her arms and equipments are recorded as being "a French fusee and bayonet, knapsack, cartridge-box and thirty cartridges." The name under which she enlisted was Robert Shurtliffe.

She served through many engagements, and underwent the usual hardships of a soldier's life, always performing her duties successfully, and never arousing any suspicion of her disguise. In June, 1782, she volunteered, with thirty others, on an expedition to crush a band of marauding Tories, and in the skirmish which ensued received two wounds. She was sent to the hospital, but still kept her secret, concealing from the surgeon a wound in the body, which she tended, and from which she extracted the ball, unassisted, leaving it to him to dress her other wound, which was near the temple. She was discharged cured, and rejoined her regiment for further service. But in 1783, after the proclamation of peace, but before the disbanding of the army, she was seized with fever, and again sent to the hospital, and this time her sex was discovered.

She received an honorable discharge from the army, returned to her home, married a young farmer named Benjamin Gannett, had three children, of whom the son became a soldier, and died at Sharon, Mass., at the age of sixty-seven years. She enjoyed a pension for her military service during her lifetime, and after her death it was continued to her husband, who, by a special act of Congress, was placed upon the same footing as the widows of Revolutionary soldiers.

The idea of a woman deliberately choosing the career of a soldier is not pleasing. But the quiet and domestic after-life and the intellectual tastes of Deborah Gannett—in fact, all that is known of her—tend to prove that, in her case, it was no romantic folly, but sincere, simple, unambitious patriotism that impelled her to give her service to the cause of her struggling country. In response to a petition from her for payment for her service, which had been long delayed, the General Court of Massachusetts, in according it to her, formally states that—

> "It further appears that the said Deborah exhibited an extraordinary instance of female heroism by discharging the duties of a faithful, gallant soldier, and at the same time preserved the virtue of her sex, unsuspected and unblemished, and was discharged from the service with a fair and honorable character."

A strange record for a Massachusetts farmer's wife, but one that she could show to her children with satisfaction.

◆

LYDIA'S TRUE LOVER.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.

It seemed to Lydia Kesson that night as if her father never would be through reading the weekly paper, as he sat contentedly by the shaded lamp, with his spectacles balanced on the bridge of his fine Roman nose, and his comfortable, slippered feet crossed one over the other, while the hands of the wooden clock travelled slowly from eight to half-past eight, and from half-past eight to nine.

"I don't see what he can possibly find to interest him," said Lydia to herself. "I am sure he must have read that account of the burning of Deacon Pleyel's barn at least four times, and I do believe he knows the list of prizes at the county fair by heart. Of all papers, the *Weekly Trumpet Blast* is certainly the most stupid I ever saw. And, dear, poor Dick must be half frozen to death out there in the corn-house."

For here was the root of the matter. Pretty Lydia was in love with Dick Churchill, who was steadfastly discountenanced by old Mr. Kesson; and this sly young woman, with the black-blue eyes and the dimple in her chin, was actually in the habit of indulging Dick with a fireside chat after the old gentleman had plodded his leisurely way up to bed, which he generally did very soon after eight o'clock.

"One can't go to bed at sunset like the chickens," reasoned Lydia to herself. "And I *must* see Dick sometimes, and it's a deal too lonesome and cold to meet under the apple trees in the orchard any more; and as long as I'm darning the stockings and mending father's clothes, I'm sure it can't signify to him what company I have."

But Mr. Kesson laid down the *Weekly Trumpet Blast* at last, and cleared his throat with a prodigious noise.

"I see, Lydia," said he "that Squire Grex has took the premium again for his fat cattle."

"Has he?" said Lydia, indifferently.

"Dreadful fore-handed man, Squire Grex," remarked Mr. Kesson, staring at the fire.

"Is he?"

"And I can't help hoping, Lydia," added the old man, at last removing his eyes from the smouldering logs and fixing them solemnly on his daughter's face, "that you'll make up your mind to reconsider the offer he was good enough to make you last month."

"Father," said Lydia, reddening to the roots of her hair, "I thought that was all past and gone."

"It aint too late yet to be Mrs. Grex, if—"

"Yes, it is!" burst in Lydia. "I never, *never* will marry that horrid, fat, disagreeable old man, not if there was nobody else in all the world!"

"Humph!" said Mr. Kesson. "Well, p'r'aps the day may come when you will be sorry for it, Lydia. Young folks *think* old folks are fools, but old folks *know* that young folks are. Dick Churchill haint been here lately, has he?" he added, sharply.

"Dick Churchill, father?"

"Because," said the elderly sage, with some asperity, "I won't have him on the place, and so I tell you. If you won't marry a well-to-do, respectable member of society like Squire David Grex, you certainly shan't throw yourself away on a vagabond like Dick Churchill."

Lydia flushed deeply, and bit off the end of her needleful of darning cotton with considerably more emphasis than the occasion seemed to demand, but she said nothing. And Mr. Kesson uttered another resounding "*Ahem!*" and went out.

But not to bed. Through some strange fatality he took it into his bald head to saunter out of the back door, and look up at the sky.

"Cloudy," said he to himself, "and rainin' a smart sprinkle. Well, the wind has been from the east all day. Bless me! what's that? It's too late in the season for fire-flies, but I sartinly *did* see a light in the corn-crib!"

And instead of going to bed, as Lydia had fondly hoped that he would, Mr. Kesson wrapped himself in an old army blanket, and crept stealthily out towards the corn-house.

Dick Churchill, watching and waiting for the candle in the middle pane of the window, which was the telegraphic signal between him and Lydia, had become thoroughly chilled and wearied, and in an evil moment had lighted his cigar to while away the lagging moments.

"But it won't do to smoke here," said Dick to himself. "It's too dry and inflammable a spot. I'll go out under the big pine tree. Phew! how it rains! Who could have supposed that it would turn into such a night as this?"

So that just as Dick went out of one door of the corn-house, old Mr. Kesson crept stealthily into the other.

The sound of creaking boards, and the fall of an ear of corn, dislodging all the rest, startled Dick; he turned just in time to see a spectral figure closing the corn-house door behind it.

"Hallo!" said Dick. "Burglars!"

Lack of promptness never had been one of Mr. Churchill's characteristics. He flung down the cigar, whose fiery end had already wrought its mission of mischief.

"I'll settle this matter," thought he; and he quietly bolted both the corn-house doors on the outside, securing them with the strong wooden pins which belonged to them.

"There!" said he to himself. "I rather think he'll keep for the present. Now I'll go and have a nice little chat with Lydia, for I see that the candle has found its way to the right place at last, and then I'll notify the constables and rouse up old Kesson. But I don't think there's any occasion for hurry."

It was not until the old clock hands touched the figure of midnight that Dick got through with all that he had to say to pretty Lydia.

"Mercy on us!" said Lydia, as the twelve strokes burred hoarsely on the listening ear of night, "how awfully late it is!"

"Yes, rather so," said Dick, suddenly remembering his prisoner. "And I suppose the fellow outside thinks so, too."

"What fellow outside?" cried Lydia, opening her eyes wide.

"Now don't be frightened, pet," said Dick. "I thought there was no use in disturbing you about it; but there is a burglar securely penned up in the corn-house outside, and has been for the last two hours."

"A burglar, Dick!"

"Just that exactly, my love."

"Oh, Dick! Oh, Dick!" cried Lydia, clinging convulsively to his arm. "A burglar! Will he kill us? Will he murder us?"

"Darling, don't worry," said Dick, taking advantage of the opportunity to administer a hug and several kisses to his sweetheart. "If there's to be any killing or murdering done, it won't be while I'm around."

"But father! Let me call father!"

"My pet, what on earth should we disturb the old gentleman for?" said Dick. "I'll just go out and interview the fellow, and then I'll wake up the chore boy and send him over to Sam Hall, the constable's house, for re-inforcements."

"But, Dick, don't go. Suppose he were to shoot you! or stab you!" cried Lydia, hysterically.

"I rather think it will take two to make that bargain," observed Dick, marching out, with the dark lantern in one hand, and Mr. Kesson's big old-fashioned gun in the other; while Lydia, from the doorstep, watched his triumphal progress with a palpitating heart.

Old Mr. Kesson, hoarse with bawling and lame in the wrists with pounding at the relentlessly closed doors, was overjoyed to hear an advancing footstep.

"Let me out!" he roared. "Thieves! Villains! Open the door!"

"Oh, yes, I think I see myself," said Dick, turning a flood of light from the dark lantern in the direction of Mr. Kesson's voice. "I'll settle you. Eh! Hallo! Why, it's Mr. Kesson!"

"It's Dick Churchill!" shouted the old man. "My dear Churchill, I never was so glad to see any one in my life. Open the door! Let me out! There have been burglars about!"

"You don't tell me so!" cried Dick.

"As sure as I live and breathe," said the old gentleman, trembling all over with excitement and fatigue. "Send for the constables. Telegraph to Yaleville at once for the special police. They actually had the impudence to bolt me in here while they went to rob my house and murder all my family in their beds."

"Well, sir," said Dick, somewhat sheepishly, "nobody is robbed and murdered in your house, because I fortunately happened to be calling on Miss Lydia, and—"

"It must have been through a special interposition of Providence," fervently cried Mr. Kesson. "Shake hands with me, Churchill. I look upon you as my preserver and that of my daughter; and I hope you won't bear malice for anything I may have been hasty and thoughtless enough to say in the past."

"Certainly not, sir," said Dick. "Pray, allow me to help you into the house."

"I'm as stiff as a crowbar," groaned Mr. Kesson; "and I've skinned an ankle tumbling over the wooden beams of the floor, and the rheumatic pains are darting through every joint in my body. Oh, dear, oh, dear, what should I have done without you, Dick!"

The constables came, but, strange to say, they could not find any trace of the burglars. The police from Yaleville were no more successful; but Mr. Kesson declared that, after this, he could not reconcile it to his sense of personal safety to live alone in the big farm-house. So Dick Churchill, now in high favor, came there to live, and in six weeks he was married to Lydia.

"I confess," said Mr. Kesson, "I did not know how much energy and good sense there was in that young Churchill. And after this business of the burglars I never should feel quite safe to stay in the old place alone."

And Dick and Lydia kept their own counsel, and they were all happy and contented together, Mr. Kesson the most of all.

◆

Getting Ready to Move.

They are going to move. The lady of the house, throwing herself into the least uncomfortable chair that remains in the chaotic parlor, tells off on her fingers the objects she has that day packed for transfer, and tries to think if there are any more she must attend to. There is the Parian statuette—no, she must carry that herself, when the family go themselves; she could not possibly trust it to a furniture man. Her favorite glass vase with the ferns on it—it will be troublesome, but she can take it in the other hand.

Table-ware, books, lamps—yes, they are all ready. SUSY will have to take the kitten in a basket. Two paper-weights and a match-safe have been forgotten, but Mr. JONES will have to stow them in his pockets. He can put in those little blue-and-gold Poems, too, while he is about it; and the salt-cellars that were accidentally left out of the china-box; and the little bronze owl, and—how many pockets has he, anyway? She reckons them up, and decides that the other small articles must go in her own pockets, and the children's, and that Mr. JONES need not take charge of anything else except the silver which he can hold in his lap quite easily, and Carlo, who must be tied to his wrist by a string. There! Now everything is arranged.

She fans herself with a piece of packing paper and draws a breath of relief. Her troubles are almost over, and really getting into the new house, with its sunny parlor and wider hall, is enough to compensate for anything. They have been crowded up so long! To be sure the room looks large enough to-day, as she glances toward its furthest dingy corners; but that is because half the furniture is out of it; when the piano was in it one could hardly turn round without knocking something over.

How many times she has had to reassure distressed callers who have tipped over the little table with their sweeping skirts! How many near-sighted gentlemen have stumbled over foot-stools and walked into chairs! No wonder. It was always so dim you could scarcely see what was where, even when you knew; with that dark paper it never *would* light up. At the other house it will all be different; but, somehow, they never seemed to notice the inconveniences until now they are to lose them. They have been happy in the old house; will they be happier in the new? She looks fondly at the dingy walls and sighs; but the wagon rattles up to the door for the last load of furniture, and she wakes from her revery with a start and hurries once more to her work.

◆

The Time to Propose.

Take the morning for it, Augustus. Pop the question then. There is no illusion to carry you away between breakfast and noontide. If she ever looks plain, she will look so then. If you are ever ill-tempered, that is the hour for it. If pecuniary questions are to weigh heavily in the coming years, you will be apt to know it at that hour, and if you really love each other, you will love before lunch.

The sunshine brings things out clearly and plainly; rouge and lily white and hair dye can't stand it. Sometimes a fresh, sweet goodness and prettiness appear in the face that is not seen by gas-light. I have known women who looked prettiest in the morning, and in the bright daylight out of doors. It is not always the sweetest woman who is what is called "a belle of the night"—whose charms come out after the lamps are lighted.

The conservatory, or the balcony, or the ball-room, or a boat on the water with music on board, or a lonely seat in the garden under a tree, with the moonlight filtering down, moves young hearts. Surroundings have much to do with such things. But, after all, the life of a married pair is not made up of romance. The commonplace comes into it very soon. Pop the question, then, in the morning, and you will not see an angel fade into an ordinary mortal. And if "she" accepts you in your business coat, with your freckles visible, she will understand that you are not always in a state of poetic ecstacy, and be more apt to remember how you like your beef-steak, and to sew on those missing buttons which befall all men sooner or later.

M. K. D.

◆

Two Ways of Spelling It.

Clergymen are called upon for odd services sometimes. A lady up-town consulted her pastor the other day upon the troubles she had in her kitchen. He said, in reply, that he thought there would be a better feeling between mistress and maid if they prayed for one another more. "I am willing to be prayed for," said the lady, "but not to be preyed upon."

◆

National Hatred.

At present there is an outcry in Paris against lager-bier saloons, on the ground that the waiter-girls in them are "Prussian spies." The public, it is said, demands the closing of those saloons. This shows to what an extent the feeling of national hatred is carried between France and Germany.

A SONG OF TO-DAY.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

From Progression's templed height,
Where the teeming arts are born,
Far across the vanquished night
Peals the music of the morn.
Not a voice that halts and stammers;
But its trenchant rhythm is blent
With the ring of wheels and hammers,
In a grand accompaniment.

"Forward, hark! The hills are red
With the splendors of the dawn;
And with steady, measured tread,
Lo! the age is marching on,
Under mightier constellations,
To a nobler range and time,
Rank and file the seried nations
Move in unison sublime.

"Poets, dreaming useless dreams
To the lilt of pastoral reeds,
Up! and choose ye sturdier themes,
Fitted to the popular needs;
In these days of push and thrift
We have learned a lustier song,
That the race is to the swift,
And the battle to the strong.

"Shame to him who shirks and waits,
Jostled by the hurrying press,
When an hundred open gates
Lead to glory and success;
While determined pluck and vim
May retrieve a crushing fall,
There is scant excuse for him
Who is crowded to the wall.

"Ye who sit with folded hands,
Waiting for auspicious skies,
Rouse and burst your slothful bands
Ere another seize the prize.
Find some honest work to do—
There are ever ways untried—
If one door is shut on you,
Push! and set another wide.

"Up! Be doing! *Something* gain—
Strive for something, great or small;
True endeavor is not vain,
And the arts have room for all;
Lay the failures and abuses
Of the past upon the shelf;
Put your powers to worthy uses,
God helps him who helps himself."

THE
Spectre Baron;
OR, THE
Knight of the Hidden Cross.

A Story of the Rhine Robbers.

By **SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.**

CHAPTER XV.

WHO HATH DONE THIS THING?

When Allenwald returned from the court, where he had spent some time in meditation, he sent Harold up to ascertain if the countess would be pleased to see Sir Victor Landorf. The old servitor departed upon his errand, and when he came back he brought word that his lady was waiting for her friends.

They found the countess in the apartment she had occupied on the previous evening, and when Allenwald and Karl had greeted her, Sir Victor was presented. Leonora's eye brightened as her gaze rested upon the noble form of the knight who had been thus introduced. Very near her own age—perhaps three or four years older—of commanding presence and right gallant bearing, and with a face cast in the pure heroic mould—handsome without being effeminate, and bold without being stern; while the smiles that ever and anon wreathed his lips and his eyes were soul-born and frank. And then Sir Victor Landorf had been her husband's dear friend. She had heard his name spoken by Sir Ulric often, and always in tenderest accents.

"Sir Victor," she said, moving forward and extending her hand, "this is a joy which I had not anticipated. Welcome to Edenburg, thou true and tried friend of my lamented husband."

"And, I trust, no less a friend to the Countess Leonora," responded the knight, raising the fair hand to his lips.

"I need friends, Sir Victor; and be sure I shall not refuse that which you offer."

Landorf took a seat, and the countess then turned to her son.

"Ah, Karl, you find the oriel empty," she said, with a smile. "Lucille is late this morning. I will send a servant to call her. So fair a day as this should have invited her forth ere this."

The countess had turned to reach the bell-cord, when Elfrida entered the apartment. The nurse would have retreated when she saw the company present, but the lady called her back.

"How is this, Elfrida? You have allowed Lucille to oversleep."

"Not so, my lady. I have come hither in search of my mistress. She must have been up with the lark, for she had left her chamber when I went in."

"Is it so? She may be walking in the court. Go you, Karl, and see if you can find her."

Karl von Linden waited not for a second bidding. He knew Lucille's favorite walk, and thither he hastened; but she was not there. He searched through the inner ballium without avail, and then he repaired to the outer ballium, where a like failure awaited him. At the gates he inquired of the porters, but they had not seen her. Back to the keep he took his way, searching through the halls and the corridors, and questioning the servants whom he met, all with the same result. Lucille was nowhere to be found, and no one had seen her.

Faint, and sick at heart, Karl leaned against the door-post of Lucille's empty chamber; and he called to mind the new guise which Wolfgang had worn on the previous evening. He thought of the messenger whom Harold had seen enter the castle from the postern, and he thought of the tramp which the wakeful servant had heard upon the bridge over the chasm after midnight. And he remembered one other thing: He remembered the words which Lucille had spoken to him—almost the last words he had heard from her lips: "*You do not know Caspar von Edenburg. I think there is nothing too wicked for him to do in the attainment of his purpose.*" And she, too, had remarked upon the sudden change in the bearing of the lieutenant, and had declared that it was "not like Wolfgang, nor yet like Sir Caspar."

A little while Karl stood thus, and then he summoned his strength for action. He returned to the countess, whom he found in deep trouble, his prolonged absence having excited her worst fears.

"Karl, you do not find her?"

"I do not find her," said the youth, in husky tones. "I have searched the castle through, and have inquired of every one I met. I have been to her chamber, where I found her couch in disorder and two chairs overturned. O, my God! what hath been done? Caspar has spirited her away, and she is within his fell power. Where is Wolfgang? Let us seek him, and demand of him information. He was roaming through the castle after midnight, and he knows of his foul deed. Allenwald—Sir Victor—go with me, and let us confront the lieutenant."

"In the name of Heaven," pleaded the countess, whose agony was intense, "if it lies in your power, I pray you to deliver the Lady Lucille. I am fully assured that Caspar hath borne her away. Things in his deportment which I could not understand before I can understand now. He is a bold, bad man, and the poor child's fate will be dreadful if she remains long in his power."

Elfrida was weeping bitterly, and with clasped hands she echoed Leonora's prayer.

"We must move quickly," said Karl; "quickly and promptly."

The palmer, to whom all eyes were instinctively turned, paced up and down the apartment a few turns in thoughtful mood.

"Lady," he at length said, addressing the countess, "we will do all that can be done. And now I have to ask of you, and also of our good Sir Karl—Will you, in this emergency, intrust the management of affairs into my hands?"

The countess looked upon the palmer, and then she glanced at Karl and at Sir Victor. A moment's thought, and she said:

"Gentlemen, to your good faith I trust all. Choose ye among yourselves who shall lead."

"Good Allenwald," spoke Sir Karl, "I bow to you."

"And I, also," added Sir Victor.

The palmer signified his willingness to accept the position thus assigned him, and then he directed that Harold and Julian and Leolin should be summoned; and Elfrida went to call them.

The three old henchmen had heard the story of Lucille's disappearance, and the stern cast of their battle-scarred faces, as they entered the chamber, gave token that they were ready and willing for any work that might give help to the maiden.

"You know what hath happened?" said Allenwald, addressing the three.

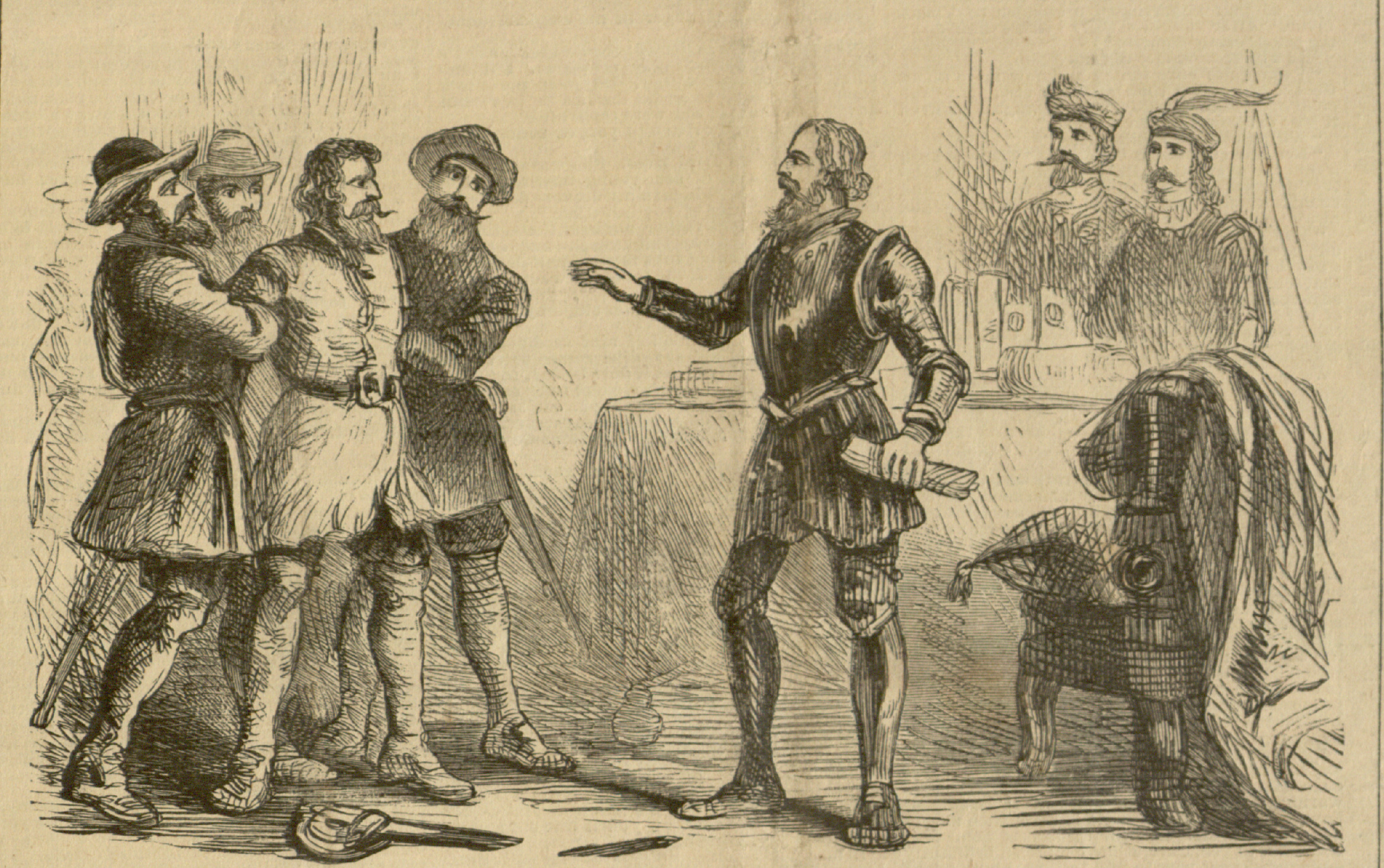
"We know," they replied in unison.

"Ere I knew of the Lady Lucille's disappearance," pursued the palmer, glancing at the countess and Sir Karl as he spoke, "I had resolved upon a search after the secret means of communication between this castle and the stronghold of the Black Wolf. If we can gain a knowledge of this secret, I think we shall learn the whereabouts of Sir Caspar; so I shall proceed exactly as I had originally planned; only this new outrage will serve to give additional energy to our movements.

"And now, my good Harold, I would know what is the available force of the castle, and how it stands touching friendship to Sir Caspar and fealty to our noble countess."

"There are in the castle, at the present time, of household officers, servants and foresters, nearly two-score able men—eight-and-thirty, at least," answered the seneschal; "and of those not far from one-half may be counted upon as true friends of our lady."

"Then," said the palmer, "with Sir Victor and Sir Karl and myself—for I can throw off this pilgrim's robe, and take up the sword again in so righteous a cause—and with ten stout men-at-arms who followed me hither, we have the advantage of numbers, as we have of justice and right. So there is a good beginning. And now who, of those at present in the castle, is Sir Caspar's confidential friend and adviser?"



WOLFGANG IS MADE A PRISONER.

"Only Wolfgang, his lieutenant," answered Harold.

"Do you think Wolfgang knows his master's secrets?"

"He is Sir Caspar's second self, and I am sure he knows all that his master could possibly have cause to communicate to a second person."

"Good sir," interposed the countess, "Harold is right. This Wolfgang has been the close companion and confidant of Caspar ever since my marriage. In the baron's absence the lieutenant holds full sway; and if business of moment is to be transacted he is always consulted."

"Aye, and more than that," ventured Leolin. "My post of observation commands an extensive range; and I can swear that Wolfgang is the confidant of the robber chiefs as he is of the baron."

"Do you think he knows the secrets of this castle—its hidden passages, and its concealed traps?"

"I am sure he does," returned Leolin.

"I have one more question," said Allenwald. "Has Sir Caspar a private apartment, where only his own trusted henchmen are allowed to intrude?"

"He has a private closet," replied Harold, "into which, beside himself, I have only known Wolfgang and Sir Hector von Waldheim to enter."

"This Sir Hector is the Saxon knight who abides with the Black Wolf?"

"Yes, sir; and he is one of the most bold and reckless of all the robbers that infest the Rhine Valley."

"Dear lady, before I make any decisive movement I must gain access to this private closet of Sir Caspar's. Take hope, and await the result," said the palmer.

"Into your hands, good Allenwald— Ah! I wish I could call you by another name."

"That name will answer for the present," returned the palmer, a quiet smile relieving for an moment the stern expression of his grand looking face; "and you may trust him who bears it as you would trust a brother. And now, if you have no further commands, we will proceed to the execution of my purpose."

"Let me not delay you a moment. I ask you only to remember this: I shall be painfully anxious until I hear your report."

"Your ladyship shall hear it as soon as may be."

"And may God give you guidance and success!" fervently prayed the countess, as her friends took their departure.

In a small chamber or barbican of one of the towers, away from observation, the party stopped for consultation.

"We are six," said the palmer, "and should certainly be able to cope with Wolfgang. Now mark me: It is my purpose to lead the lieutenant—or to cause him to lead me—to the private closet of the baron. You will station yourselves where you can see us enter, without being seen in turn. When we have entered, and closed the door, you will draw near and listen for my signal."

He drew a small silver whistle from his bosom, which was suspended from his neck by a silken cord, and showed it to Sir Victor.

"You know this, Landorf?"

"I know its note well."

"And when you hear it you will be ready to respond?"

"Yes."

"You, and these others."

Karl and the three old servitors bowed in assent.

"Now, Harold, do you lead me by the private closet, and point to the door as we pass. Then you may rejoin your companions, and I will seek the lieutenant."

Thus bidden, the seneschal led the way through a devious passage, and along a circular corridor, to the extreme eastern part of the keep, where he pointed out a stout oaken door, thickly studded with brazen bolts, set in a deep arch, and covered by a faded curtain of purple damask.

"That is the door," said Harold; "and it is always kept locked when not occupied by the baron or his lieutenant."

"You are sure the lieutenant has a key?"

"Yes. He and the baron each have one."

Having thanked him for his assistance, the palmer bade Harold to rejoin his companions, while he went in search of Wolfgang.

The lieutenant was approaching the keep from the main gate when Allenwald met him.

"Ah, Wolfgang," said the palmer, in a frank, hearty way, "I have been looking for you. When, think you, can I see Sir Caspar?"

"Indeed, Sir Pilgrim, I cannot tell. He has gone away on pressing business, and the time of his return is uncertain."

"I am sorry for that," pursued the palmer, musingly. "I would confer with him upon matters of moment, and my time is limited. Pardon me for the question: Are you in our noble baron's confidence?"

"I am his chief officer," replied Wolfgang, guardedly.

"And may you not be able to give me the information I seek?"

"That depends upon the nature of your object."

"I will explain. You are perhaps aware that the father of the present baron bestowed upon the monastery of St. Francis a large tract of land on the western confines of Zarten?"

"I have heard of it," said Wolfgang.

"Sir Ulric," continued Allenwald, "obtained that land by patent from the Emperor Conrad, as I am well informed. It now appears that certain hangers-on at the court of Aix deny that any such grant was ever made, and are seeking to dispossess the monastery of the property. The Bishop of Neustadt, who is deeply interested, has commissioned me to examine into the matter; and my first desire is to know if the imperial grant to Sir Ulric is in existence."

So simple and so earnest had been the palmer in the explanation of his business that Wolfgang seemed not to entertain a thought beyond the thing expressed.

"Such a grant is in existence," he replied, "and is at this moment among the baron's private papers."

"Good!" exclaimed the palmer. "If you will let me look upon the instrument, and so observe it that I can conscientiously swear to its existence, my work is most bravely begun. Where is it?"

"It is in the baron's private closet."

"Lead the way, Sir Lieutenant, and let me see it. I will not detain you."

Wolfgang surely had nothing to fear from the old pilgrim, whose only visible weapon was his staff of olive-wood; and as for the secrets of the private room, they were not to be discovered by a stranger, no matter how sharp his eyes might be. He rested his hand upon the hilt of his own good sword, as though to assure himself that it was in readiness in case of need, and then said:

"You may see the instrument, Sir Pilgrim. Follow me."

Allenwald had not expected a success quite so speedy. But would the lieutenant conduct him to the chamber of secrets? Yes, to the very door which Harold had pointed out; and as Wolfgang raised the curtain, and applied the key to the stout lock, the palmer could feel his heart throb with the excitement of wild anticipation. He was upon the threshold of a wondrous adventure.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE OLD TOWER.

The private closet, or lord's sanctum, of Edenburg Castle was in the northeastern tower of the modern donjon, and the embrasures, which looked out upon two sides, were glazed. A large oaken cabinet occupied nearly the whole of one of the other sides, while above and below the embrasures were shelves partially filled with manuscript books, now neglected and dust-covered. Near to the quaint old cabinet, where fell the light from one of the windows, stood a table, with a cover of black velvet, upon which were sheets of parchment and writing materials.

When the palmer had entered, Wolfgang closed the door, and then motioned his companion to a seat by the table; but the latter was in no hurry to accept. The lieutenant had unlocked one of the upper doors of the cabinet, and as he was in the act of pulling it open, Allenwald placed the silver whistle to his lips, and sounded a note that cut the air like a knife.

"Ha!" cried Wolfgang, leaping back, "What means that?"

His hand was upon the hilt of his sword, and the weapon was half drawn, when the door was thrown open, and the two knights entered, followed by the three old henchmen.

"Is this treachery?" gasped the astounded man, drawing his sword, and retreating to a corner.

"Not treachery," replied the palmer. "There can be no treachery against such a traitor to all honest society as thou art. It is a ruse, my dear Wolfgang; and I have simply to inform you that you are now in my power. Will you deliver up your sword?"

"Never!"

"Then we must take it. Sir Victor—Karl—disarm him."

A single well-aimed blow of Landorf's heavy sword broke Wolfgang's blade in twain, and in a very few moments he was entirely disarmed and given into the charge of Julian and Leolin.

Allenwald now untied the rope that encircled his waist, and threw off the long dark robe, revealing a stalwart form, clad in a full suit of Milan mail, of rare pattern and most exquisite workmanship. Wolfgang started, and stared upon the transformed man with a dazed look.

"Now, my Wolfgang," said the palmer, with the assurance of one who knows his power, and with a stern dignity that betokened an iron will, "I am coming directly to the point, and I shall be very brief. That you are a villain I know full well, and I speak a sober truth when I tell you that I would no more hesitate, should the mood seize me, to let your life-blood out upon this floor, than I would hesitate to place my foot upon an asp or upon a poisonous spider! There is, somewhere among the baron's private papers, a plan of this castle, with all its secret traps and hidden passages. Show me where that plan is, and you may live. If you do not give me the information, I shall search for it after you are dead!"

Wolfgang turned pale as death, and his tongue seemed glued to the roof of his mouth. It was evident, from his glance, that his first thought was of the palmer's full intent; and it was furthermore evident that a single glance satisfied him upon that point. He stood face to face with death. There could be no mistake. Hired and pampered villains, holding place under villains of higher degree, are always moral cowards, and the lieutenant was not an exception. Perhaps he thought that his refusal to speak could make no difference in the final result, since, if the palmer knew of the existence of the plan, he would be sure to find it if he gave his will to the work. At all events, he succumbed more readily than had been anticipated, though he gave evidence of great bitterness of spirit.

"Gentlemen," he said, after due reflection, "I am in your power, and at your mercy; and I am not willing to sacrifice my life when it may not benefit my master. Were the draught entirely beyond your reach, and my lord's weal were depending upon its concealment, I would die ere I would speak; but such is not the case."

Then he turned to the palmer, and pointing to the cabinet, he added:

"The keys of the old ark are all in the bunch which hangs from the lock of the door I have opened. You will open the other door, and pull out the lower drawer, beyond which you will find three smaller drawers, and in the middle one of these the plan you seek is deposited."

With but little difficulty Allenwald found the keys to the different locks, and ere long the plan was in his hand, neatly rolled up in a leathern case, and secured by a stout band of goatskin. The plan was in four parts, or upon four separate sheets of parchment, and had been prepared by an experienced artist. Two of the draughts were of the modern keep, while the other two held keys to the mysteries of the Paladin's Tower. The palmer's eyes brightened as he followed out the details, and when he had examined the plans sufficiently for his present purpose, he rolled them up and put them within the bosom of his mailed doublet.

"Now," said he, "for an application of the first secret revealed by these plans. Harold, I observe a tinder-box upon the table. Will you light a candle?"

The light was quickly produced, and Allenwald then went to the wall opposite the cabinet, and touched a secret spring beneath one of the book-shelves. This enabled him to withdraw a hidden bolt, after which he pulled open a door, which had before appeared only as a part of the solid wall, and beyond which was a flight of stone steps, leading down into impenetrable gloom.

"You will go on in advance with the light, Harold; and you"—to Julian and Leolin—"will follow on with your prisoner."

"Not there! not there!" cried Wolfgang. "When I told you where the plans were I—"

But the palmer would not listen, and the lieutenant was forced into the aperture and down the stone steps, Sir Victor giving an impetus to his descent by a few vigorous pushes from behind. Far down in the mystic depths of the donjon were found a number of stout cells, with walls of great thickness and doors of solid iron, and into one of these the lieutenant was cast.

"Borrow no unnecessary trouble from your present situation," said Allenwald. "If you fancied, when you so readily revealed to me the secret of the old cabinet, that you were to remain at liberty to thwart me, you were mistaken. I only put you here to keep you out of mischief."

The door was closed upon the prisoner and securely bolted, after which the party returned to the room above. Allenwald was now all life and animation—once more the warrior and the leader.

"We have now no time to waste," he said, when he had reclosed the secret door. "Harold, you can point out all those in the castle who are sworn friends of the baron, or who would be likely to be enemies to us?"

"I can."

"Then go with Sir Victor and Sir Karl and point them out every one." And turning to the first mentioned knight, he added:

"Landorf, you will summon our men-at-arms, and secure the rascals as speedily and as quietly as possible; and when you have them secure and disarmed, be sure you lock them up out of harm's way. Harold and Julian will show you where the strong rooms are."

"And now, my good Leolin, I would have you come with me and lead the way to the top of the main tower."

This main tower was at the southwestern angle of the castle, and overlooked the whole structure, besides commanding a view of the surrounding country. Upon the parapet, in the outer angle of the tower, stood an iron banner-staff, set deeply into a socket drilled into the stone. The halliards were gone; but the staff itself served Allenwald's purpose. From his bosom he drew a light scarf of crimson silk, which he gave to the breeze, and ere many minutes had passed the piercing notes of a shrill whistle, like unto that which had so startled the lieutenant, came up from the wood.

"Our work is done here," said the palmer; and having taken down his signal, he descended from the tower.

In the lower hall he met the two knights, who informed him that Sir Caspar's minions were all safely confined.

"We had no trouble," explained Karl, "and made but little noise. We have put twenty of them in durance, considering it safer that a few of the doubtful ones should be out of the way. Harold can swear that every man now at liberty in the castle may be depended upon as true and loyal to the countess."

"Good!" responded Allenwald. "And now let us to the gate. My signal has been answered, and our men will very soon be up."

"The men whom you sent back yesterday did not retire to a great distance, I apprehend," ventured Karl.

"Only far enough to communicate with other men whom you have not yet seen," replied the palmer, with a smile. "In truth, Sir Karl, Landorf was sent hither to support you: and be sure he did not come without sufficient force. Your letter was dispatched with all possible speed. As for myself, I was impelled to accompany the expedition by an old-time friendship for Sir Ulric and his fair countess. I have known the Lady Leonora in other years."

Karl von Linden gazed into the face of the strange man, now changed in appearance by the removal of the pilgrim's robe, and as he gazed a perceptible tremor shook his frame.

Allenwald passed on towards the vestibule, and Karl caught Landorf by the arm.

"Sir Victor, in Heaven's name, what have I seen? Is this another spectre, or—"

"Hush!" interrupted Landorf, with an imperative gesture. "If your eyes have discovered, let your tongue keep the secret."

Karl said no more; but he gazed after the palmer with new interest.

Hardly had they reached the outer barbican, when the tramp of horses' feet was heard upon the drawbridge, and upon throwing open the gate, our hero beheld full a hundred stout soldiers, all well armed and splendidly mounted, and among the officers he recognized several whom he knew. The leader was a lieutenant of the Imperial Guard, named Conrad, and him Karl greeted warmly.

"My good Conrad," said the palmer, after the usual salutations had been passed, "you are not to enter the castle at present. I have discovered a secret passage to and from the Carlovingian Keep, which I wish you to guard. The outlet is in the deep gorge beyond the cliff that flanks the rear wall. Leolin will conduct you to the spot. He has not known of this subterranean pass until now; but I have shown him a plan of the entrance, and he knows well where it is. You will take fifty men with you, and make prisoners of all strangers that enter the gorge, either from the mountain path or from the castle vaults."

Without asking needless questions Conrad called away one-half his force, and was soon ready to follow his guide. The way lay around the castle to the eastward, to a point where a stout bridge spanned the chasm of the mountain torrent, thence across a table of rock to the face of a towering cliff, where they were forced to traverse a winding path upon a narrow shelf of rock that looked off upon the right into a depth that seemed almost bottomless. Beyond this cliff they came to a rugged pass, that led down into the gorge of which Allenwald had spoken. It was a wild and forbidding spot, and through it lay the path from Edenburg to the Castle von Schwarzwolf; but until now Leolin had never known that this deep vale might be reached by other means. The palmer had shown to him the parchment plan of the secret passage from the vaults of the Paladin's Tower, and he knew where to look for the outlet. He found it completely hidden by a thick clump of bushes, and further disguised by the piling up of large stones in such a manner that the aperture could not be seen until one had come full upon it.

And here Conrad took his station and disposed his men.

Meantime Allenwald had led the remainder of the force into the court, and caused the drawbridge to be raised, and the gates closed, and a guard set, after which he returned to the keep, where he bade the servants to furnish him with iron crows and picks. When these implements had been produced, and given into Julian's charge, Harold was sent to the private apartments of the lieutenant to procure the keys of the castle vaults. The seneschal knew that Wolfgang had the keeping of all the keys, and he was not long in finding them, though he had to force two or three cupboard doors in the search. Of these keys there were a large number, and they made a goodly burden for two stout men.

"Now," said the palmer, when his preparations had been made, "we will proceed to the Paladin's Tower, and there commence operations. Your torches are in readiness, Harold?"

"All ready, and in the hands of men who can light them quickly," returned the seneschal.

"Then come with me."

A score, or more, of the men-at-arms were left to guard the courts and the avenues of the keep, and the rest followed the palmer. Karl and Victor were to hold themselves in readiness to lead any fighting that might be forced upon them, while the old servants of the castle were to assist in opening the way to the vaults.

Arrived at the spectre-chamber of the old tower, the palmer drew forth his plans.

"Here is a draught of this floor," he said, "and we shall see how simple is the secret when once understood. Here is a crack marked between two of the flags; and here we have a dagger with its point resting thereon. Then you observe an arrrow, with its head towards the inner wall. This style of hieroglyphic is familiar to me. Here is the crack designated, and I will insert the blade of my dagger."

So saying, Allenwald bent over the edge of a broad flag near the centre of the room, and thrust his dagger point down into the crevice between that and its mate, moving it carefully in the direction indicated by the arrow. Presently he met with an obstruction. He pressed upon it, and directly he heard the gliding of an iron bolt; and in a moment more the broad stone settled to the depth of its own thickness, and then slid away down an inclined plane, leaving an aperture in the floor nearly a yard square, and also revealing a flight of stone steps. Upon examination the mechanism proved to be very simple, though somewhat ponderous. The sliding flag was balanced by a long oaken lever, upon the far end of which was suspended a large block of stone, so that moderate pressure from below was sufficient to throw the flag back into its place, where a spring bolt caught it and held it. It was this spring which the dagger had touched.

Two torches were now lighted, and the party descended the steps, finding themselves next in a chamber of the same size and shape of the one overhead. There had once been embrasures in the walls, but they had been filled up with solid masonry, and but for the torches the place would have been utterly dark. And here a further discovery was made, of peculiar interest to our hero, as well as to the old servants of the castle. Directly beneath the aperture in the floor of the haunted chamber was found a large brazen chafing-dish, set upon a tripod, in which were the charred incrustations of resin and sulphur lately burned. And on one side, supported upon wooden blocks, was an enormous trough of iron, in which were two ponderous balls of stone. The palmer set one of these balls in motion upon the deeply corrugated bottom of the long trough, and the noise produced was like deep thunder.

"What think you of this, Sir Karl?"

"I think I can now account for the mysterious vapor that filled the chamber above, and for the terrific thunder," replied the knight.

"And now," added Allenwald, "we will find the spectre himself if he be near at hand."

After this the palmer again had recourse to his plans, and a secret door was found in the inner wall, close by the iron trough. The arrangement was much like the former, save that the stone revolved upon a central pivot. Beyond here was another flight of steps, upon descending which they found themselves in a large vaulted apartment, which had evidently once been the main hall of the Carlovingian castle. There was a stout oaken door, thickly studded with iron bolts, in the eastern wall, while upon the opposite side, next to the modern keep, a corresponding doorway had been walled up.

Allenwald again examined his plans, and very soon opened a secret way by the side of the closed pass.

"This," said he, "of course communicates with the main keep of the castle, and is probably the way mostly used by those who have occasion to pass to and fro. But we will not enter here at present. Our course is to the eastward. Harold, see if you find a key that will open this door."

The key was soon selected from one of the bunches—a ponderous instrument—and the heavy, iron-bound door was opened, admitting them to a vaulted passage, at the end of which still another flight of steps led downward. At the foot of these steps a second door was reached, beyond which the vaulted way was continued in a devious, winding course, with doors of massive iron plate set into the wall at irregular intervals, said doors being perforated at the top with numerous small holes, evidently for the admission of air.

"These are the old dungeons," said Harold. "O! if they could speak, what a story they would tell!"

"Hark!" interrupted Julian, who was in advance with a torch. "I surely heard a human voice."

"Is there any one here?" demanded Allenwald, hurrying up. "If so, speak!"

"Mercy! mercy!" came in hollow tones from one of the dungeons. "You speak not with Wolfgang's voice. Who are you?"

Harold uttered a wild and sudden exclamation, and started forward with his keys. With trembling hands he at length found one that fitted the lock, and the heavy door was swung open.

The glare of the torches fell upon a human form, clad in filthy rags, and wasted almost to a skeleton. His hair and beard were long and matted, and white like silver. Heavy manacles were upon his legs, and a ponderous chain secured them to a bolt in the floor. For a time the poor sufferer was forced to bow his head to shut his eyes from the glaring light, but when one of the torches had been withdrawn he looked up.

"In Heaven's name, be ye friends or foes?" he gasped.

Harold dropped his keys and sprang forward.

"WARBECK! WARBECK! O, is it thou?"

"Harold! O, my God! Do I dream?"

"No, no, Warbeck. It is I—it is Harold. And here is Julian; and here are other friends. O, my poor Warbeck!"

"And am I to be free? Shall I see the light of heaven, and breathe the pure, fresh air once more?"

"Yes! yes!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE

Plotter's Crime;

OR,

The Usurped Inheritance.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,
Author of "The Unwilling Bride," "A Jealous Woman's Revenge," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

GEORGIA'S FLIGHT COOLLY ACCEPTED—MONA AND HER DENUNCIATIONS.

Unconscious of all that was happening so near her on that eventful night, Viola at length slept as youth and health sleeps, in spite of the trouble that weighed upon her. She had given no pledge to avoid a meeting with Malcolm, and it was her firm purpose to see him once more at least, and what might come of that interview she could not foresee herself.

Divided between her duty to her supposed father and the strong affection she cherished for her lover, she could not make up her mind as to which would win in the contest that raged within her.

Wearied with contending feelings, she at length retired, and, as we have said, fell into the blessed sleep given to the young, even in the midst of keenest suffering.

On the following morning breakfast was served very late, and as she was leaving her room she encountered her maid, looking scared. She hurriedly asked:

"Whar's Miss Georgia, young mistis? She aint nebber been in her bed las' night, an' I didn't see nothin' of her in your room when I helped you to dress dis mornin'."

"You know she was not with me. Nothing can have happened to her; she may be only hiding from you to give you a fright."

"You jes' come look inter her room for yerse'f, an' see how she's lef' it. I've looked in ebbery hole an' corner, an' dere aint no sign ob her."

Viola passed on to Georgia's room, which was left in great confusion. Torn paper was scattered over the floor, and the clothing she had taken off was lying on the chairs; a trunk, packed and strapped, had been pulled from the wall, and on a second one, with the key in the lock, was an open sheet, on which were written a few words addressed to herself:

"VIOLA—Have the rest of my things put in this trunk, and keep the key yourself till I call for it. Some of them must be done up before they are put away. I am going away from this place; I have stayed here too long already, and I have the means of taking care of myself. Nobody need feel uneasy about me, for I can manage my own affairs, and I shall not thank any one to make a fuss over my disappearance. By the time you get this I shall be so far away that all thought of pursuit will be useless. GEORGIA."

With this scrap in her hand, Viola hastened down stairs, and found Colonel Malone and his wife just coming in to breakfast. Both looked wretched, but in her agitation she did not remark it.

"Oh, papa! something dreadful has happened! Georgia has actually run away, and here is the note she left behind her. Where can she have gone? What will become of her?"

Prepared for this announcement, which he had been expecting all the morning, Malone put on an expression of shocked surprise, and said:

"What could have induced the child to take so mad a step as that? Let me see what she says, my dear."

Mrs. Malone, who had not been taken into her husband's confidence, manifested genuine alarm, and declared that immediate measures must be taken to arrest the flight, and bring the fugitive back to her home.

Malone glanced over the lines offered him by Viola, and decisively said:

"I shall do nothing of the kind. I am glad to be rid of Georgia Aiken on any terms, and as she has chosen to leave my house, I shall use no means to compel her to return. As she says, she is quite shrewd enough to take care of herself. Come, let us eat our breakfast. The coffee will get chilled."

"Dear papa, how can you take it in this way? What friends has poor Georgia that she can go to, even if she has money to pay her way?"

Malone coldly replied:

"I am no longer responsible for her. She is now the ward of Malcolm, and, no doubt, she has made some arrangement to meet him before she has gone very far. You need not distress yourself about Georgia, my dear. 'A bad penny is sure to come back again,' so you may comfort yourself with that adage."

Viola sank into the chair Malone drew back for her, struck to the heart by the insinuated treachery of both lover and friend, and never uttered another word on the subject of Georgia's flight. Malone and his wife discussed it in all its bearings, except those most intimately connected with Hugh, and every word that was uttered only tended to confirm the belief that she had gone off in this mysterious manner to join Malcolm.

Sick at heart, Viola, with effort, swallowed a few morsels, and then excusing herself, threw on a hat, and went out upon the lawn, hoping the fresh air and morning sunshine would enable her to bear this bitter blow at least with outward composure.

Malone and his wife soon left the dining-room, and as they entered the hall, he said, with a sneer:

"That blow hit hard, but it will finish the business of that impertinent pretender to Viola's favor. After this she will 'whistle him down the wind' easily enough."

His wife searchingly regarded him.

"I am quite sure that you know more about Georgia's evasion than any one else. Mr. Malcolm had nothing to do with it, though I believed it best to allow Viola to think so."

"Why should you think that?"

"Because you took it too coolly. There is such a thing as overacting, Robert; though fortunately Viola has not my experience with you, and could not judge you as I can. You sent the girl away yourself, I am certain."

"You think yourself very sharp-sighted, madam, but you are not infallible. I did not send her away, but as she was determined herself to go, after that scare Hugh gave her this afternoon, I acknowledge that I helped her off. Malcolm knows nothing of her escapade, but it is my will that Viola shall think he does, and learn to believe that Georgia is under his care."

Mrs Malone sighed.

"I shall say nothing to enlighten her, poor child! I am thinking of the effect of this news on Hugh when he comes to hear it. When he rouses from the trance in which he lies, his first thought will be of Georgia. He will insist on seeing her, I know."

"He must be told that she refuses to see him. After his conduct yesterday afternoon, he can scarcely expect her to be willing to come into his presence. If you had kept them apart, as was your duty, this trouble would never have arisen. That young flirt has nearly ruined the life of my boy, and if this illness results in anything serious to him I will never forgive you."

"In that case I can only die myself," she said, with that apathetic calmness born of long suffering. "I have explained to you how it was, and if you will recall the tempest of passion with which you assailed me in the heyday of your life to overcome my scruples as to the marriage you proposed, you will understand how impossible it was for me to control Hugh when he set his heart on this girl."

"You do well to recall that folly to me, madam, which was repented of almost as soon as it was enacted. Why did you not hold up my case as a warning to the boy, and tell him to beware of hanging a millstone around his neck, such as you have been to me. But for the secret bond that bound me to you, I might have married brilliantly—played a great part in life, for I have both talent and ambition. But the consciousness of having wrecked my life by such a marriage as I made has held me down and made me what I am—a mere seeker after gold, which may, after all, prove worthless to the one creature in the world who has been an object of pride to me."

His wife listened to these cruel taunts with more apathy than might have been expected. They had been repeated to her so often that they seemed to have lost the power they once possessed to sting her to the soul, and she quietly replied:

"Our marriage was a mistake on both sides; but if I have ruined your life, what have you done for mine? For a few brief weeks of delusive happiness I have paid as dear a price as was ever exacted of woman. But I do not wish to reproach you, Robert, though you lose no opportunity of stabbing me to the heart. I have learned to bear bitter words from you, and all I ask of Heaven is strength and forbearance to enable me to do my duty by you as becomes a wife who is bound to the interests of her husband."

"Pious cant!" he muttered, as he strode away from her on his way to Hugh's apartment, untouched by the weary sadness imprinted on her face. With a sigh, she followed him, to find the room darkened, and both patient and physician buried in sleep. As both husband and wife knew how much Father Jerome needed repose after his long and exhausting vigil, no effort was made to arouse him, and orders were sent to the cook to have his breakfast in readiness whenever it was called for.

Hugh lay like a marble image in the same position in which he had fallen asleep, and the only evidence of life about him was the soft, regular respiration which came from his half-parted lips. His mother knew that he was in no danger of never waking again, but Malone could not understand his condition, and he was inexpressibly wretched as he sat hour after hour beside the bed, watching with keenest anxiety for some evidence that the vital powers would not be exhausted before the mysterious sleep came to an end.

Mrs. Malone left him to his silent watch, and retired from the room, knowing that nothing could be done for Hugh till he emerged from this healing trance, which would not be for many hours to come.

As she was leaving Malone said:

"Keep an eye on Viola, and do not allow her an opportunity to meet Malcolm in the grounds. I know that he is on the watch for an interview, and she must be kept from knowing that he is still in this vicinity."

She bent her head in reply, and went out to seek the young girl, who had disappeared from the yard, and could not immediately be found.

Viola, unconscious of the way she was pursuing, so full was her heart of restless uncertainty, moved mechanically from the vicinity of the house, and descended a pathway leading toward the valley. Suddenly she came on a small cabin almost concealed from view by the trees and undergrowth which had sprung up around it. A few yards from its humble portal, in the open sunshine, was a large boulder, on which old Mona was perched, with her knitting in her hands, which was all the work she was now capable of doing.

She was crooning some old ditty in a low, monotonous tone, and did not hear the approach of her visitor till Viola stood beside her. Looking up startled, she exclaimed, in a frightened tone:

"Who am you, an' whar did you come from? Oh, Lord! what's comin' to dis house when ghosses comes back to haunt it! Who am you, anyhow, young mistis?"

"Have you forgotten me already, aunty? You saw me the night I came with papa to the old homestead."

Mona arose, and peered closely at Viola with her bleared, half sightless eyes, and a singular change came over her face. She sharply asked:

"Is Bob Malone de man you calls papa?"

"Of course—who else should I claim as my father?"

"Who else? Why, de one you looks mos' like, an' dat is my own blessed Marse Tom. I didn't see you good t'other night, but I kin now, an' thar's his bright ha'r, his blue eyes wi de color o' de vi'let in 'em—eyes like nobody else's dat ever I seed 'cept his'n. Dey was wunnerful eyes, wi' de purple glow in dem, mixed wid de blue o' de sky in a clear day. Young mistis, you aint got no right, wi' dem eyes, to call yerse'f anything but Tom Malone's darter."

Viola laughed, faintly, and said:

"Why not? Cousins often look alike, and Mr. Malone was papa's first cousin. Am I indeed so much like him?"

"You don't look like nobody else in dis worl', an' it's past me if you belongs to de black Malone instead o' de fair one. Dat was de way dey was 'stinguished when dey was young men. One were dark an' fierce lookin'; de other fair an' gracious as de blessed sunshine, till such trouble fell on him as broke his sperrit, an' made him ole afore his time. Woe's me! dat was a dreffle day when de young wife was took out'n de big house and shet up in de narrow one we mus' all come to. Marse Tom was jes' broken-hearted, an' he had to go to furrin parts to git back his health an' sperrits. But t'want o' no use—de poor feller died thar, an' thar won't no one atween de money an' black Bob but one poor, little gal baby. He put *her* out'n de way, an' den he come in fur all de fortin."

Viola had never heard these details concerning her father's family, and she listened now with vivid interest till the old woman came to the conclusion of her speech. She flushed at Mona's last words, and sharply said:

"You must not speak in such terms of my father, nor accuse him of such crime as your words impute to him. He is incapable of wronging any one—especially a helpless little child."

Mona shook her head dubiously.

"It's sartin dat de chile was well an' strong, an' as likely to live to enjoy her own as any baby; he took her away from us in spite of all dat could be said, an' de nex' news was, dat de poor thing were dead, an' black Bob was de marster o' Undercliff. Ef dat aint s'picious, I don't know what am."

Viola indignantly said:

"You eat my father's bread—you are well taken care of in your helpless old age, and yet you dare to speak of him in this way? You are an ungrateful and slanderous old crone to utter such insinuations against your benefactor."

"*He* aint no benefact' o' mine; he's a outsider, he is, and h'aint as much right as I has on dis place. I was born on it; me an' mine worked to keep it up, an' I's a right to all I gits. Six o' my chillen has worked for my keep, though dey's all gone to glory long ago, thanks to de blessed Lord what took 'em to hisself. I let 'em go, an' said: 'God's will be done;' but when de new marster took from me de one gran'chile I had, an' carried her off as nuss to de unfortnit baby what died so soon, I cursed him in my heart, an' de curse will fall yit. I'm a prophet, an' I know it will."

"If papa had not meant to act fairly by the little heiress he would never have taken away with her one of the family servants," said Viola. "When your granddaughter came back did *she* say that any wrong had been done? As to your curses, I hardly think they will produce any effect on papa's fortunes."

Mona raised her finger in an emphatic manner.

"De gal never was '*lowed* to come back, an dat's whar 'spicion o' foul play comes in. I dunno what ever became o' her. Dey tole me she'd gone to Canady, whar de darkies is free; but how's I to know ef dat were the trufe?"

"Has she never written to you, or communicated with you in any way?"

"Never! as de Lord lives. She wasn't 'lowed to; but I dreams of her, young mistis, an' she tells me a heap o' things in my dreams dat would make your ha'r rise ef you heard 'em."

"I believe I had rather not hear them, then;" and Viola turned away, thinking she had been too indulgent in listening thus far to a half-demented old woman's abuse of the father in whom she had perfect faith.

The old woman arrested her steps by abruptly asking:

"Whar's Miss Georgia? I aint seed nor heard her dis mornin'; an' she allus comes to see me when de sun is shinin', as it does to-day, to ax me to tell her fortin. If dere's a cloud to be seed, she won't have nothin' said; but ef you can't see even a white speck over de blue, she says she'll have it tole den, an' it mus' be bright as de day itself."

"Georgia has left Undercliff for good. She will never come back, I think."

"An' what fur?—do you know?" And Mona arose and came nearer to her, looking eagerly inquisitive.

"I only know that she went away because she wished to do so. She left uncermoniously enough."

"He! he! he! he!" chuckled the old woman. "*I* knows—I knows—an' you don't. I thought she'd have to go, and I knowed who would help her off at a pinch. Ole Mona don't wander 'bout dis place night an' day widout findin' out suffin. I seed a heap yisterday arternoon an' las' night—a heap dat I dursn't speak 'bout."

"If you know anything concerning Georgia's flight, I think you will be made to speak when papa hears about it."

"Oh! oh! dat's good—dat's rich! Black Bob a comin' to make de ol' 'oman tell him what he knows more about dan *she* does. Go, skin yer eyes, young mistis, and use 'em watchin' de ole fox yer calls yer fader, an' you'll fine out a heap o' things wuth knowin.'"

Before Viola could reply to this speech a third party joined them. Mrs. Malone had turned her steps in that direction in search of the young girl, and she had overheard Mona's last words as she came near.

With an expression of severity, she said:

"Mona, I am surprised to hear you speak in such terms of your master, and still more astonished that his daughter will listen to such insinuations against as kind a father as he is. Your excuse is, that you are in your second childhood, but I can find none for Viola."

Before Viola could speak Mona broke in almost violently:

"I aint no mo' chile dan you is, an' I knows a heap you'd be sorry to have tole. *You* needn't be pitchin' inter dis young gal fur nothin'. *She's* bin a speakin' up fur black Bob as ef she b'lieves in him—a fing you don' do yerself, as you knows well enough. He's a bad man, and a tricky one, and you're helpin' him on in his villainy. Dis chile here is brung to dis lonesome place to marry her to dat boy you an' de marster finks so much on, an' Miss Georgia is got rid on bekase she'd spile yer plans; but young Hugh loves *her*, an' he don't care button fur de other, as you knows well enough. *I* aint gwine to be put on by any new mistis, and I aint afeard of you nor black Bob eyther."

Having thus expressed herself, Mona went back to her cabin at as brisk a pace as she could command, and shut the door to preclude any possibility of a reply from the new lady of Undercliff.

Mrs. Malone had listened with perfect self-control to this rude outburst, though there was deep dread in her heart that this prying, shrewd old creature could really enlighten Viola regarding many things which it was necessary to keep from her, and she now said with a forced smile:

"Let us go back to the house, Viola. Forget what that old creature may have said, for she is certainly in her dotage. She is too old to be punished for her impertinence, and knowing that, she takes advantage of her position, and says and does the most annoying things. She hates your father; but you have found that out for yourself."

"She certainly has no love for him," was the brief reply.

"Of course you believed nothing said by that old imbecile, and I am glad to hear that you spoke in defence of Robert. Come with me to my room. I have there many things of interest to show you which I brought with me from Europe. Stay with me and help me to beguile the hours that must elapse before Hugh needs me again. You do not know how ill he was last night. Father Jerome magnetized him as the only means of quieting his excitement."

Viola made many inquiries about Hugh now, and seemed so much interested in what was told her that his mother began to hope that, after all, the task she had undertaken would not be so very difficult of accomplishment. The two spent the greater part of the day together, and thus a meeting with Malcolm was prevented.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OLD MONA SEES A GHOST—VIOLA'S PROMISE.

On this day Mrs. Malone ordered luncheon sent up to her room, as she wished to detain Viola near her, and she spared no pains to interest her by displaying to her the various objects of art, on a miniature scale, which she had collected while travelling in foreign lands. Lovely mosaics, rare jewels, the settings of which were even more exquisite than the gems themselves for the skill with which they were wrought; and beautiful wood carvings brought from Berne, and other points in Switzerland.

There was also a fine collection of engravings, and with these to aid her memory, Mrs. Malone sketched portions of her travels in so graphic a manner that Viola was charmed. Mrs. Malone finally said:

"Some day I hope that we shall make up a family party and make an extended tour. When Hugh recovers we will arrange our future plans. He will require a change, and as the winter comes on, we will probably make arrangements to spend the cold months in Italy. *There* you can find both fine scenery and noble art."

Viola put down the engraving she was examining, and abruptly said:

"If you expect me to go with you as Hugh's wife, you will be disappointed. Papa has spoken to me about his wish that we should be married, and I have thought of it long enough to know that it can never be."

"And why not, my dear?" asked Mrs. Malone, softly. "Dear child, if you only knew how delusive the thing called first love is, you would not cling to the belief that you can only be happy with the person who has awakened a passing interest in your mind. I say a passing interest advisely, for Mr. Malcolm must soon become to you as a mere myth, parted from him, as you are, for all time."

Viola flushed crimson, and then grew very pale.

"If he submits to be parted from me in that way I can forget him, but it will not be that I may give my hand to Hugh. He loves Georgia, and if pressure is to be brought to bear on both of us to bring about the union papa seems to have set his heart on, that union would promise very little happiness to either of us."

"As much as attends most marriages, I fear," said the elder woman, sadly. "I rushed into a secret marriage with the man I madly loved; he seemed even more passionately attached to me than I was to him, yet see the result. Years of bitter penitence on my side—of disenchantment on his, and only at this late day has he set my conscience at rest by what took place yesterday. Marriage is truly a lottery, Viola, and those who are suited to each other in position and culture are far more likely to find happiness together than the wayward ones who ask for more than it is in human nature to give—a desperate passion which will not soon burn itself to cold ashes."

Viola gazed on her with dilating eyes, too much touched and surprised to speak. She had thought only of the romance of the long concealed marriage, not of the blight which it had caused to fall on two lives, matched, but not mated.

Mrs. Malone went on, in the same sad tones:

"From your infancy you have been designed for Hugh's wife, and your father will not falter in his purpose to make you such, for he knows it is for the ultimate happiness of both of you. Hugh's infatuation for Georgia is over. He knows since yesterday afternoon how heartlessly she has led him on, with no intention of redeeming the pledges she had given him. They had a fearful scene on the hillside, and parted forever. The poor boy came back to me broken-hearted, and in the state of excitement which led to his subsequent attack. Georgia acted wisely in going to her new guardian, for this house was no longer a possible home for her."

Viola listened with bowed head and drooping lips. All the brightness seemed to have gone out of her sweet face, all joy from her young heart. She firmly said, though:

"Neither papa nor any one else shall coerce or persuade me into a marriage I do not like. Hugh is but a boy, and we scarcely know each other."

"So much the better, my dear. You can get acquainted, and learn to like each other in the process. Hugh is no boy; he is several years older than you; and he has many noble and attractive qualities. You are a far more lovable person than that young firebrand who has withdrawn herself from him, and a few weeks' association will enable him to see how much more lovable you are than Georgia. If they had not been thrown so constantly together, Hugh would never have thought of her."

"But—but even if Hugh should take a fancy to me, I have no intention of allowing myself to become his second choice. Even if Georgia has gone to claim the protection of her new guardian, it does not follow that he is faithless to me on her account. For weeks Mr. Malcolm and I were thrown together in most intimate association, and papa must accept the results that flowed from his tacit encouragement of our love for each other. I have promised to marry him, and until I am released by himself I will not give him up. I have thought it all over, and that is my final decision."

Though surprised and annoyed by this candid statement, Mrs. Malone was not discouraged. She said:

"Your father thought you perfectly safe with so honorable a man as he then believed Mr. Malcolm to be. He considered him bound to accept the provisions of Mr. Aiken's will, and never supposed that he would take the advantage he did of the friendship that was allowed to spring up between you. Robert had not apprised you of his views for yourself, because he wished you and Hugh to meet and form such an attachment as would have been sure to spring up between you but for the unfortunate entanglement into which you had mutually fallen."

"Mr. Malcolm has acted honorably throughout the whole affair," said Viola, resentfully, "and I will not be induced to think evil of him. Papa should have guarded me better if he had other views for me. I will not marry without his consent, neither will I accept the husband he has chosen for me, even if Hugh can be brought to submission, which I doubt."

Mrs. Malone smiled faintly.

"You are very positive, my dear, but stronger people than you have had to succumb before your father's will. As to Hugh, I have no doubt as to what will happen when he is himself again. The true diamond will be recognized and valued far above the paste imitation, and he will ask to claim it as his own. We will not discuss Mr. Malcolm, for I only know him through what Robert has told me; but I should like to make an agreement with you, Viola."

"Of what nature? I can promise nothing."

"You can promise me this, dear, that if nothing further is heard from Mr. Malcolm you will at least take into consideration the plans of your father, and if, in the end, they are not too repugnant to you, you will try to make us all happy by doing as we wish."

After a brief pause Viola said:

"I may safely promise that, for if Mr. Malcolm lives I shall surely hear from him. He is not a man to be easily driven from his purpose, and I know that he loves me."

"It would be a wonder if he did not, charming and fair to see as you are, Viola, for it is not often that one meets with a lovelier girl than you," said the flattering voice, tuned to its gentlest tones. "I rejoice in the fate which gave you to me as my daughter, and I will hope that the boy I love very dearly may yet be so fortunate as to win you for his wife."

Viola shook her head almost defiantly.

"You are very good to estimate me so highly, but that can never be. Hugh and I may be good friends, but nothing more."

"Remember your promise, dear."

"So I will; but that will amount to nothing. I shall hear from my lover as certainly as the sun will rise to-morrow."

"And hear no good of him either," muttered Malone to himself, as he came in through the open door. "Only wait a few hours, young lady, and see what fate has in store for him."

His wife looked up at him, and asked:

"Has Father Jerome aroused from his heavy sleep yet?"

"No; he must have been keeping awake for a month past, I think, to sleep as he does," was the gruff reply. "I've stayed by Hugh until I feel fagged and wretched, and I think I'll go out and walk about the place. I've hardly visited all my old favorite nooks yet. You are quite sure that nothing can happen to Hugh while I am gone?"

"Quite. Do you think I would have left him if I had any apprehensions as to his safety? He will not wake before the hour named by the priest, and this long magnetic sleep will prove the salvation of his life and reason. I have often seen its effect before, and I am only surprised that you should know so little about them."

"I have never investigated it, because I thought it an absurd humbug. Such marvellous stories have been told about it that I refused to believe in anything that was stated. If I had been in Hugh's room, I think I should have refused to have it tried on him; but he was asleep when I went back to him, and his condition is so critical that I feared to insist on having the influence removed. You should have sent for me before you allowed the priest to have his own way; and if evil, in place of good, comes to the boy from such charlatanism, I shall hold both you and him responsible."

"I accept the responsibility," said his wife, coldly. "I take as warm an interest in Hugh as you do, and I believed that Father Jerome's skill could alone save him from a terrible attack of brain fever—perhaps from insanity itself. I knew your prejudice against magnetism, therefore I did not summon you to object, as you would have done, to its use."

"You took a great deal on yourself, I must say," he almost rudely replied; "but you are not to act again without consulting me. I choose to be the head of my own house, and nothing is to be done in it without my approval. If Hugh is ultimately benefited—good—'all is well that ends well.' If not—ah! words fail me to express the retribution I would call down on your head if evil results to him from this blind tampering with agencies with which we are imperfectly acquainted."

He seemed to have forgotten the presence of Viola, and she listened in amazement to such words and tones addressed to the woman she had believed so dear to him. Malone caught the expression of her face, and spoke almost as brusquely to her as to his wife:

"You need not look so strangely, Viola; a man cannot always be making love to his wife, as you will find out some of these days. And Pauline thinks because of what took place here yesterday that she is to act as she pleases, and get me under her thumb as completely as I have held her under mine for so many years."

Mrs. Malone only looked at him deprecatingly, and Viola, in a shocked voice, said:

"It is strange to me to hear you speak in this way to any one, papa; I thought you the most considerate and kind-hearted of men."

"To *you* I always have been such, because you have never placed yourself in opposition to me. Remember one thing, Viola: I will not be thwarted in anything I have set my heart on, and guide yourself accordingly. I have been soft with you, but I can be hard as iron, as Pauline can tell you."

He went out, as he finished saying this, just in that desperate humor which leads men to commit any act of violence which a brutal and unrestrained temper may prompt. His uneasiness and uncertainty concerning Hugh acted as an irritant, and these, combined with other causes, rendered him, for the time, a most dangerous and unscrupulous adversary.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Failures.

Probably it is a good and wholesome thing for the advancement of mankind that very few persons contemplate or make any special preparation for failures. Hope buoys them up with visions of success, and, though they see examples all round them of broken fortunes, hard times, and defeats of every kind, they fondly believe such evils will not come to them. Only thus could the work of the world go on steadily and cheerfully. Were each one occupied in imagining possible disasters and mentally gauging his fortitude to bear them, his power and enthusiasm for actual effort would be sadly diminished.

"NO NECESSITY FOR IT."

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Miller, "I'm awfully glad that we're going to live in the country. I've always wanted a country home."

"My dear," said Miss Primrose, "I never heard you say so before."

"Because I never *did* say so, I suppose," indifferently remarked Mrs. Miller. "Oh! you may look surprised, Cecilia, but, you see, you never have been married. You don't understand what a deal of managing men take. If I had told Octavius that I wanted to live in the country, he would have set himself to work—merely for the sake of logic—to conjure up forty different reasons why it wouldn't have been the thing! Now that he has suggested the idea himself, I have only to acquiesce, don't you see?"

Mrs. Miller was a plump, comfortable young woman, with bright blue eyes, blonde hair and a fair, serene forehead,—one of those rare personages who never seem in the least put out about anything. Mr. Miller was a small, sharp-featured, nervous mortal, who went through life on the private detective principle, always looking out for hidden motives or secret plots!

"I never should have any peace of my life, if I hadn't learned how to manage Octavius," added the wife, blandly. "We used to have a deal of trouble about servants. Octavius said there was no necessity for any woman having domestic trials of that nature. He says a servant can be picked from an intelligence office as easily as he selects the straightest and best made ten-penny nail from a ten-pound package. He's full of theories, but I hardly think they would work in real life. Oh, yes, I'm charmed with the idea of a country home. Do come and see us, Cecilia, when we're settled."

Miss Primrose went away, much marvelling.

"Arabella is a girl of talent," she said to herself. "I've always had faith in her, since she used to win all the school prizes, and manage the moonlight feasts without old Madame Moretti ever finding out anything about the business! But, really Mr. Miller must be a great trial!"

The Miller family had scarcely inhabited their new homestead a week, before Miss Primrose put on her new spring hat, and dyed gloves, and took the horse-cars for the suburban solitudes wherein Sassafras Lodge was situated.

"Dear me!" soliloquized she, "it's quite a big place! With a double bay-window, and a lawn, and a stone-rimmed sun dial in front of the door. And there is dear Bell, now, at the window, all smiles."

Mrs. Miller received her friend with a welcoming kiss.

"So glad to see you, dear," said she. "Come into the back room, where we can be a little quieter."

"What *is* that noise?" asked Miss Primrose, glancing apprehensively around. "Somebody appears to be disagreeing violently with somebody else."

"It's Octavius and his stableman," explained Mrs. Miller, the least shadow of a smile curving her perfect red lips. "Octavius selected him on account of his high forehead and frank manner. He always said that when Nature hung out her signals no one could be mistaken. I had to discharge an excellent cook once because Octavius said she had a furtive eye. But Nature seems to have played Octavius false this time," she added, half smiling.

"But," cried Miss Primrose, starting, "what is that crash?"

"Don't be alarmed, dear," said Mrs. Miller; "but I rather suspect that it is Octavius pitching John James down the terrace steps."

"Oughtn't we to go for the police?" faltered Miss Primrose, all in a tremble.

"Oh, no," said Arabella, calmly, "it's no very unusual occurrence. Octavius changes help about every other day. He used to say that there was no occasion for such domestic upturnings, but I think he's altering his mind."

Mr. Miller rushed into the room at this moment, purple in the face, with flaming eyes and breath that came and went as rapidly as if it were worked by a force pump.

"I've kicked him into the road," gasped he, "and warned him never to—oh, how d'ye do, Miss Primrose? Glad to see you, I'm sure!—never to show his face on the premises again! Handing my oats down to a boy at the back stable door, while my horses were eating hay! Supplying his family with fresh eggs from my hennery, while we bought 'em at the grocery at sixty cents a dozen. It's outrageous. Perfectly outlandish! That's what it is!"

"So like that laundress we had last June," said Mrs. Miller, calmly. "She used to fill her basket from my pantry every time she went home after a day's wash. You said I didn't show any judgment in engaging her, you remember."

Mr. Miller only glared at his wife, without making any answer, and began to explain to Miss Primrose the nature of the alterations he had made in the drawing-room of Sassafras Lodge.

"It would be quite a little Paradise," he said to Miss Primrose, during the temporary absence of his wife from the room, "if only it wasn't for this deuced question of servants. You see, in Madison Avenue *I* never had any men. Here I'm obliged to keep two. Don't say a word to Bella, Miss Primrose; but if this sort of thing goes on I shall be compelled to break up housekeeping."

"Just what I've said myself half a dozen times," said Mrs. Miller, coming sweetly up behind, with her husband's hat-brush in her hand. "And you told me, Octy, that all women talked just so, and that there was no sort of necessity for it."

Mr. Miller took the hat-brush and left the room, banging the door behind him with some unnecessary emphasis.

Breakfast was served at the usual hour the next day, but Mrs. Miller sat behind the coffee urn for full fifteen minutes before her lord and master came in from his usual walk around the premises.

"I never saw anything like it, in all my life!" he cried, when at last he did put in an appearance. "The new gardener lying dead-drunk under the hedge, the garden full of chickens, and the calf loose in the clover field. I've sent him down to the railroad station in Farmer Shipley's wagon, with a constable."

"Yes," said Mrs. Miller. "Bridget drank, if you remember—that very nice woman that brought such an excellent character from the clergyman's family that she lived with last. You thought it was very silly of me to be so annoyed about little things."

"Hang Bridget!" shouted Mr. Miller.

"Oh, no, my dear," said his wife. "Capital punishment is a deal too severe for such a trivial offence. I seem to have heard that Judge Jackson subsequently gave her thirty days on the Island for a similar misdemeanor."

"*I'd* put 'em somewhere for thirty thousand days!" muttered the husband, vindictively.

"I thought," observed Arabella, with provoking calmness, "that you always selected them according to the physiognomical theories of Lavater; and that gardener certainly had a face like one of the wise men of Athens."

"Arabella," said Mr. Miller, tearing a roll in two, and buttering it with savage energy, "this is no joke."

"I've thought so many a time, Octavius," said Mrs. Miller, with unwonted seriousness.

Her husband looked hard at her; a certain conviction seemed to creep athwart the features of his face.

"Bella," said he.

"Yes, dear," responded Arabella.

"Do you mean to say that you *always* have such trouble as this—in the housekeeping department, I mean?"

"Most generally, Octavius. Of course, there are some good women to be hired; but it requires the patience of Job, the philosophy of Socrates, the sweet temper of St. Monica to manage a nineteenth century household; especially," she added, with a roguish twinkle in her eyes, "when one has a husband who is always reiterating the fact that there is no necessity for any domestic hitches or rubs."

"I see," said Mr. Miller. He rose, and going around to the opposite side of the table, took his wife's hand kindly in his. "My dear Bella," he declared, "until now I never had the least idea of how much you had to endure. I dare say I may have seemed surly and unsympathetic; but believe me, my dear, it shall never happen again. There's no teacher like experience."

For a moment someting like real, actual moisture suffused the eyes of the merry, laughing little wife. She let her head drop on her middle-aged husband's shoulder.

"I don't care how many trials I may have, Octavius," said she, "so long as you sympathize with me in them."

Mr. Miller gave his wife a hearty kiss.

"Well said, my love," said he. "Get on your hat; we'll take the ten-o'clock train to the city, and go through all the intelligence offices. And I really believe that your common sense and judgment will be of inestimable value to me in the selection of a new domestic staff."

Mrs. Miller's face grew radiant. In her heart she felt that her husband had never paid her such a compliment before.

"I shall never again," she thought, "hear that tiresome old form of words: 'There is no necessity for it.'"

—As continued health is vastly preferable to the happiest recovery from illness, so is innocence superior to the truest repentance.

LOVE'S COMPLETENESS.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

Where but *one* loves
It oft brings tears,
And sometimes sorrow,
Wild hopes and fears—
A thorny way,
A sad to-day,
And a dark to-morrow.

Where *two* love
It bringeth bliss
Beyond all measure;
The true-love kiss,
The soft caress
Of tenderness,
That sweethearts' treasure.

To walk alone
The weary way
Through field or meadow,
However gay,
However fair
With blossoms rare,
Half seems in shadow.

But to the twain,
Who are but one
In thought and feeling,
The blessed sun
Shines all the way,
Though dark the day,
Dim light revealing.

How sweet is love
That softly binds
Twin souls together—
Two kindred minds;
That gilds the gloom,
And makes life bloom
Despite the weather.

How grand is love,
That lifts earth up,
Forsaking never;
The bitter cup
It turns aside,
And will abide
With us forever.

◆

Only a Mechanic

OR,

The Trials of a Workingman.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By MAJOR ALFRED ROCHEFORT.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CONSPIRACY.

Blissfully ignorant of the efforts and schemes that were being made for his overthrow, Ned Rand went on with his work.

It would hardly be correct to say that he was happier under his improved worldly circumstances, for comfort and happiness are by no means synonymous.

By a closer attention to business, if that were possible, during the day, and by reading his favorite authors, and carrying on his “pet studies,” as he called them, at night, Ned sought to keep down the thought that came ever uppermost in his mind.

With his high moral sense he felt that it was wicked to love Ethel as he had been doing. She was now the wife of another, and the old feeling must be banished forever.

He knew that friendship often ended in love, and, on the principle of a rule's working both ways, he reasoned that love could end in friendship. How could he, with his generous, simple ways, know that there never had been such a case recorded in all the history of human emotions?

The very effort not to think of her made him think of her the more. Even in his studies he missed her; and in reading his favorite authors every passage they had admired together brought her the more vividly before his mind.

Mrs. Rand tried to take Ethel's place by becoming more of a companion to her son; and that he appreciated her thoughtful efforts was shown by his well-assumed cheerfulness.

Ethel, as was right and proper, now made her home with her husband's family; and when Ned and his mother did not call to see her in the evening she called to see them. Nor was Ethel any happier than Ned under her improved worldly conditions.

Her present mode of living was in striking contrast with any of her past life which she could bring to mind, yet often when riding out with Mrs. Moore she recalled the boating trips on the Harlem with her noble brother, and secretly sighed for the days that were past.

It must not be imagined from this that she carried a heavy yoke, or that she took upon herself the responsible duties of a wife without due consideration.

So far as lay in her power she repaid her invalid husband's love by a loyal devotion and a high sense of duty, but in marrying she gave no thought to herself, or if she did, it was only to consider the effect of her conduct on those she loved.

It is safe to say that if Ned Rand had been strong and prosperous at the time, she would never have married Edgar Moore.

In addition to her readiness to sacrifice everything for Ned, it must be confessed that that strong, deep pity which is said to be akin to love revived the girlish liking for Edgar Moore, and made her eager to lift the black clouds that had fallen on his life.

She knew her own heart better now than before, and down deep in its pure depths she tried to bury forever the thought that her love had not been given with her hand.

Donald Morton had no place in her mind, for, where she could not think well of one, she tried not to think at all. Certain it is that she had not the remotest idea of her relationship to or her claims upon that man, any more than if he were a native of Patagonia.

Perhaps it was as well that she could not see that she was herself the central figure in the strange but imperfectly understood drama going on about her, nor that she was the indirect cause of all the trouble that had come to and was about to befall Ned Rand.

Since Morton had discharged Ned, he tried to excuse the act by working himself into the belief that the young mechanic wanted only an excuse to be his foe.

Morton knew full well that if Ned suspected the truth as to Ethel's antecedents, he would be tireless in his efforts to have justice done her, and that his own evidence would have great weight in establishing her claims.

If Morton could have killed all those who stood in his way, he would not have hesitated a moment, provided, always, that it brought no danger to himself.

But as he could not remove such obstacles in this fashion, his plan was to bring upon them such odium as would render their evidence worthless in the minds of people having a respect for character.

Chiswick and Gurly were just the men to plan and execute this work; and except furnishing them with the money they required, Morton made up his mind to hold himself aloof; for it was essential that he should keep his high standing by remaining unknown to the agents employed by his lieutenants.

One evening, about half-past eight o'clock, while Mrs. Rand was sewing in her own room, the girl came in and said that Polly Wogley was down stairs, and was very anxious to see Ned.

Polly had been a frequent and always a welcome visitor at the house, but this night—an unusual occurrence, by the way—Ned had gone out.

“Tell Polly to come up,” said Mrs. Rand.

In a few seconds Polly Wogley rushed into the room, her face flushed with the exertion of rapid walking, and her honest gray eyes filled with anxiety.

“Where is Mr. Rand?” was Polly's salutation, as she looked eagerly about the room, as if with the hope of seeing him.

“He left after supper,” said Mrs. Rand, rising and kissing Polly. “But you are in trouble, my child; calm yourself, and tell me if I can help you.”

“I am in trouble,” said Polly, her voice trembling with excitement. “Where 's yer son gone?”

“He did not say, Polly.”

“Did he say when he 'd be back?”

“No. Why do you ask?”

“Because I want to see him. Are you sure he has not gone to see Miss Ethel?”

Polly knew that Ethel was now living at Mr. Moore's, but, like nearly all the rest of the world, she was ignorant of her marriage to Edgar.

“It is possible that he has gone there,” said Mrs. Rand, thoughtfully, “for Edgar has had a turn for the worse. But why can't I do as well as Ned?”

“I 'm not free to tell you now. Wait, wait, and I'll be back again very soon.”

Saying this, Polly gathered her shawl about her, for it was a cool evening in the early spring, and darted from the room.

Polly Wogley was moved by no ordinary impulse. She might have saved herself a long walk by taking a street car to Mr. Moore's house; but such a vehicle was too slow for her purpose.

She fairly flew along the streets; and every policeman she passed turned and looked after her, debating in his own mind whether he ought to pursue and arrest her, or leave it to the man on the next beat.

Polly reached Mr. Moore's house out of breath, but in an increased state of excitement.

Ethel was near the door when the servant answered the bell, and so she went to Polly at once and led her into the parlor.

“Is Mr. Rand here?” were Polly's first words.

“He is not, Polly.”

“Has he been here this evening?”

“No. Why do you ask?” asked Ethel, catching the other's excited manner from force of her sympathy.

“I wanted to find him—to warn him not to go to a certain place to-night. There 's a trap set for him. Oh, I cannot wait. I must see him before he goes there.”

And Polly wrung her hands and rose to her feet.

“Before he goes where, Polly? Tell me all about it. You know my interest. You know if any great harm were to befall my brother, how I should feel it. Calm yourself, and tell me all.”

“Chiswick, Gurly and Push, I heard them talking at the Neptune House about dusk. They have formed a plan to get Ned Rand into a den of thieves—a place where stolen goods are kept; and when he is there, the place will be raided by the police, and all but Ned will get off. Oh, I must save him!” cried Polly, as she hastened to the door.

“But wait, Polly. Wait and I will tell Mr. Moore, Edgar's father, and he will be able to assist. If not, I must go with you. I cannot stand the suspense,” said Ethel, now quite as much wrought up as Polly.

“No, no; there is danger to you as well as Ned Rand. I don't understand it, and so I can't explain it; but there is danger. I can go where you would be out of place. Leave it to me. God bless you, Miss Ethel.”

Polly caught Ethel in her arms, kissed her, and then darted out before another question could be put.

The torture of doubt is often worse than the agony of direct knowledge.

The death of a dear one, whose eyes we close for the last sleep, may be borne with resignation, if not with fortitude, while the fate of a loved one on a doomed ship drives the mind to distraction before the list of the lost arrives.

Ethel felt as if she were being tortured with her hands and feet tied, for she believed that Ned was in a danger of which he was ignorant, and to rescue him from which she was powerless.

Edgar was now so weak as to require all her time and attention.

He had rallied, and the doctors felt for a time that youth, a good constitution, and the impulse to life given by the presence of the gentle Ethel, would stir to vitality the dormant muscles and sleeping nerves. But the hope was delusive.

Patient, uncomplaining, perhaps unsuffering, he lay stretched on his bed, every bodily function beyond the control of his will, excepting his power over his tongue and the ability to open and close his eyes.

Through the latter his brave soul looked out without flinching.

Robbed of every vestige of passion, of worldliness, of what might be called selfishness, his love for Ethel now shone out with a beauty that was not of earth. He never wearied in telling her of this love.

It was the anchor that held him to earth.

It was the light that filled the heaven of his closing life with the glories of mountain sunsets and the beauties of promises fulfilled.

Though only a few months had passed since Ethel became his wife, it seemed to him, as he watched her or lay peacefully dreaming of her when she was gone, that ages of happiness had passed since she first kissed his cold forehead, and pressed his helpless hands in hers, and called him:

“My husband!”

At times his frail life fluttered so close to the narrow line that divides time from eternity, that only by an effort of will could he bring himself to realize that the angel he had imagined by his side was his wife, still in the flesh and full of the beauty of youth and devotion.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CHISWICK AND GURLY MAKE A REPORT.

If happiness consisted of great wealth and the ability to gratify every physical want, Donald Morton ought to have been a very contented man, whereas we know he was just the reverse.

To Chiswick and Gurly he pretended to treat lightly the demands of the unfortunate woman who claimed to be his wife; but at heart he knew that she was all she represented herself to be, and his great dread was that the world would come into possession of this knowledge.

Immediately after the return of this woman from the asylum, in which she had been so long confined through his instrumentality, Morton set on foot an inquiry looking to the discovery of the son, whom he had sent away with strangers in the long ago, and paid so liberally to be rid of.

Through an English detective agency he learned that the doctor's family, into which the child had been adopted, had left England some years before and was now in America.

An American detective agency was given the contract to find the whereabouts of this family in the United States, but they had not had time to set their machinery in operation.

Donald Morton realized more and more the loneliness, if not the lovelessness of his situation; and he felt that if he could be brought into communication with the son from whom he had been glad to part, he would make him his heir, if he did not actually disclose their relationship.

Both Chiswick and Gurly believed that the woman was Donald Morton's wife.

“Why,” said the latter to Chiswick—for they talked very freely about their employer when not in his presence,—“the woman came to me, and I saw enough of her case to be sure that she 's Morton's wife, and to know that if the proper lawyer takes hold of her case she can make it hot for the old man.”

“Do you think there 's any truth in the woman's story about a child?” asked Chiswick.

“Not the slightest doubt in the world about it. Oh, I tell you when a woman 's parted from her child in that way, she hangs on through life to the hope of seeing it again. The more I see of women—and I do see a heap of them in my business—the more convinced I am that they are strange creatures, and that it 's no use for a man to try and find 'em out. But you can bet heavy that there 's a child hid some place.”

“Then you sympathize with the women?”

“Well, yes, Chiswick, I may say I do. You see, I 'm the tenderest-hearted man that ever lived; that 's one reason why I never married and had a wife and a lot of children of my own.”

“Indeed!” said Chiswick, in surprise.

“Yes; I was always afraid that they might die first, and I knew I could never stand that. But as to this woman, I wish, for Morton's sake, she could be put quietly away,” said Gurly.

“She has no money. I don't see why Morton should fear her. You know she is stopping with Dr. Kenworthy; the doctor knew her in the past, and he 's trying to help her now. I tried to get him to send her away, but the old man got so angry that I was glad to apologize for the suggestion and to get away with a whole skin;” and Chiswick laughed a cold, heartless laugh that revealed all his white teeth gleaming between his lips, like a blade half drawn from its scabbard.

The foregoing conversation is needed to show the utter heartlessness of these two men, but it will also give an idea of the cool, business-like way in which they looked at the nefarious business they had on hand.

Dr. Kenworthy had been Morton's physician for many years, without ever becoming his friend. He had suspected him of much evil doing, but it was his business to attend to the man's physical ills without any care for his moral character.

The coming of Mrs. Morton, however, roused the old doctor to action, and without telling her or any one else of his purpose, he set about righting her wrongs, if she had any, and bringing Donald Morton to justice if he deserved it.

Donald Morton sat in his own room one midnight, about a month after the time when he had formed a compact with Chiswick and Gurly for the ruin of Ned Rand.

He had told Mrs. Belton to go to bed, and that he would himself sit up, as he expected dispatches of importance about midnight.

It was after midnight, nearly two o'clock in the morning, indeed, when he was awakened from a doze by hearing the front door bell.

He ran down, turned higher the light in the hall, and, as he admitted Chiswick and Gurly, he eagerly asked:

“What news?”

“Good news,” said Gurly.

“Got him?”

“Yes.”

“All worked well?”

“Like a charm.”

“Let us go inside and talk it over,” said Chiswick, coming last into the vestibule and closing the door behind him.

“Good! Come to the dining-room. I think we shall find a little set-out and a bottle of wine there.”

Donald Morton, with a feeling of great relief, for he had been very anxious all the evening, led the way to the dining-room, where they found the lights turned up and the table set for three.

“Ha! I'm thirsty,” said Gurly, catching sight of the bottle. “Excuse me if I help myself.” And he poured out a glass of brandy and tossed it off.

Chiswick and Gurly ate like men coming in hungry after hard work in the cool night air; but, though Morton went through the motions, nothing solid passed his lips.

He watched his lieutenants as if to read in their faces the reports of the success which he was shortly to hear from their lips.

“Now,” said Gurly, drawing his coat sleeve across his lips, and throwing himself back in his chair with a sigh of satisfaction, “I feel better, and quite ready to talk.”

“And as you love to hear talk when you are yourself the speaker, I shall smoke while you make the report,” said Chiswick, lighting a cigar, and resting his chin on his upturned palms.

“Well,” began Gurly, “I could sum up the whole report in the single sentence: ‘We have succeeded.’ But I have often noticed that people are much more interested in the details of an important event than in the actual results.”

“Very true; very true,” said Morton.

“Then to begin at the beginning,” continued Gurly, as he moistened his lips with a sip of brandy kept conveniently at hand, “we made our rendezvous at the Neptune House, and as the spring boating has begun we attracted no attention. I should say that our tools attracted no attention, for we were far too wise to appear on the surface ourselves.”

“We remained out of sight; but, like the man that works the Punch and Judy puppets, we could be found when wanted,” chuckled Chiswick.

“We knew our people,” continued Gurly. “They are all men that I've defended again and again. And, though it may seem like bragging, I can truthfully say that if it hadn't been for me every man Jack of them would now be in the Sing Sing Penitentiary. Those are high-priced fellows, Mr. Morton—”

“If you spent half the money on them that you got from me,” interrupted Morton, “they must be very high-priced, indeed.”

“We spent every cent,” asserted Chiswick.

“Every red,” protested Gurly. “We had to rent rooms; then we had to buy, at market price, stolen goods of all kinds, and some of the most valuable goods we had to conceal in the cellar of Ned Rand's house. Ha, ha, ha! very funny that. Burglars generally enter a house to rid it of silver, jewelry, and other valuables, but our men carried these things into Rand's cellar, last night and left them there—”

“Dangerous business that,” said Morton.

“You can bet it was, but our fellows did it safely. Well, after getting our trap fixed the thing was to coax the game to walk into it.”

“Yes, Gurly, that required skill,” said Morton, now very much interested.

“We had the skill and the patience,” Gurly continued. “We got Push Wogley interested, though the fellow has a sneaking liking for Rand. We knew that Polly Wogley was sweet on Ned, so we used that as the bait, for he 's a gallant fellow, always ready to rush to the aid of folks in distress. We sent a letter through Push, purporting to come from Polly. Chiswick got that up in artistic style, spelling as natural as life and all that. Well, the letter asked Ned to meet Polly at a certain house at nine o'clock last night as she wanted his help ‘as much,’ the letter said, ‘as you wanted mine at one time.’ You know she 'd helped him him when he was sick. Ned bit at the bait. He was on hand. He was conducted to a room where all the goods were stored, and told to remain there till Polly came. Of course Polly did not come at once, but the officers did. We 'd sent word to the chief of police; and so the place was raided. Rand was captured, and so was Polly Wogley, who, it seems, had reached the place for the purpose of warning Ned. She got wind of the plot and tried to spoil it; so I 'm not at all sorry that she 's gone to jail for her impudence.”

“And Ned Rand is in jail, charged with robbery and with having stolen goods in his house, for by this time his house has been searched,” said Chiswick, flipping the ashes from his cigar with his little finger.

“Splendid! Splendid!” exclaimed Morton, adding, in a less ardent tone: “But the plan is only half carried out.”

“What do you mean?” asked Gurly.

“I mean that Ned Rand is not yet tried and convicted.”

“You could hardly expect to have everything done in one night, Mr. Morton,” said Gurly, in surprise.

“Of course not. But do you feel sure that he will be convicted?”

“As sure, Mr. Morton, as that you sit there. He was a companion of the ex-convict Coots. He was at Coots's funeral, as two detectives can prove. He has been thick with Coots's daughter, for they were captured in the same fence. Knowing what I do, I could clear Rand,” said Gurly, taking another sip of brandy, and refilling his glass; “but I don't think there 's another lawyer in the world that could do it.”

“He is as good as in the penitentiary,” added Chiswick. “But I'm a little afraid Push won't like it about his sister. He 's a queer fellow, and I think his head hasn't been quite right since the death of his father.”

“My friends,” said Morton, beaming from one to the other, “you have both done well. Rid me now of this woman who persists in calling herself my wife, and the future is assured—”

Donald Morton suddenly stopped.

A closet door swung open, and the woman in black, with her vail thrown back and her dark eyes blazing, stood before them.

CHAPTER XXX.

A THUNDERBOLT.

Neither Chiswick nor Gurly would have hesitated about making a false report to Donald Morton if they imagined that their own ends could be served thereby; but as it happened, they told the exact truth as to the trap that had closed on unsuspecting Ned Rand.

Intent upon helping one who had helped him, and as unsuspecting as a child to any danger, Ned Rand went to the place mentioned in the forged letter, and twenty minutes afterwards he was in the hands of the police.

It was useless for him to show the letter that was the cause of his coming, or to protest his innocence; the police were familiar with such subterfuges.

He was handcuffed like an old offender, and marched off to the station between two officers, while a number of other officers followed, with the miscellaneous plunder found in the room in which Ned was surprised and captured.

At the station-house Ned saw Polly. She, too, was a prisoner, and this fact prevented his charging her with the treason of which he at first felt she had been guilty.

“Oh, Mr. Rand,” cried Polly, when she caught sight of him, “too late I learned of the scheme to ruin you; but I tried to save you. God knows, I tried to save you.”

“I think you meant right, Polly. But why did you send me this letter?” asked Ned, handing her the note appointing the meeting.

“I never wrote to you. Before Heaven, that is not my work. Wait, wait, and you will see that I have been your friend.”

“I 'd advise you two not to talk so loud,” said the officer in charge of the station. “Come, I'll take your records, and send you to your cells.”

Ned and Polly stood up before the desk, and their names, ages, places of birth, occupations, and all that in police parlance goes to make up the “Blotter Record,” was written down, and then they were conducted to grated cells, not far apart, yet too far removed to hold any communication.

So unexpected, so humiliating was the blow that had been dealt him, that Ned, during the long hours of that most cheerless night, was unable to collect his thoughts so as to account for his situation.

He was stunned; and he felt that he was the victim of a horrible nightmare, from which he must awake to find himself in his own bed.

He had been sitting for hours on a hard bench, with his head between his hands, when he was roused from his stupor by the turning of a key in a lock.

He looked quickly up, and saw a man opening the grated cell door, while another man stood behind him with a basket of broken bread and a tin pail surrounded by a lot of tin cups.

“Here 's yer breakfast,” said the man who opened the door.

The other man filled one of the cups with coffee, and placing a piece of bread on top of it, he set it on the bench beside the prisoner.

“I want nothing to eat,” said Ned; “but I will pay liberally if I can get writing materials, and a messenger to carry a note to my mother.”

“You can't write any note or get any message here,” said the officer. “You must do all them things through yer lawyer.”

“But I haven't got any lawyer.”

“I guess you know where to find one,” said the officer, and he went off to make his round of the cells.

Ned did not take further notice of the food. He sat down and was brooding again, when he heard his name called, and through the bars he saw the sallow, foxy face of Gurly peering in.

“Hello, friend Rand,” called out the lawyer. “Sorry to hear of your trouble. Read of it in the papers not half an hour ago, and came down to offer my services. There must be some mistake about this.”

“I am afraid, sir,” said Ned, who never had any liking for this man, “that there is no mistake at all.”

“Why, Mr. Rand, what do you mean?” asked the lawyer, with well-assumed surprise.

“I mean that I am the victim of a deliberate conspiracy.”

“But who could do it? You have no enemies?”

“I should have none. Now, Mr.—Mr—”

“Mr. Gurly,” prompted the lawyer.

“Yes, Mr. Gurly. If you want to help me, get word to my mother that I am here; or, better still, have some one carry a note to her from me.”

“I should be delighted to do that, Mr. Rand, but if I act in this matter it must be in a professional way.”

“In a professional way?”

“Yes; as your lawyer,” said Gurly.

Ned hesitated. He reasoned that he must have a lawyer, and while he disliked Gurly as a man, he might be able professionally.

Donald Morton had employed him, and this was an evidence that he had skill—at least, that is how Ned looked at it.

“Very well, Mr. Gurly,” he said, “act for me professionally. I do not think you will have much difficulty in showing that I am entirely innocent of the crime charged against me.”

“I hope not; I hope not, I 'm sure,” said Gurly, making a memorandum in a greasy little book which he fished from his pocket. “One thing is certain, if the case goes against you it won't be my fault. Now, keep mum and I 'll come back and talk over matters with you, before the preliminary hearing which is set down for ten o'clock this morning.”

Gurly stood before the grating during this conversation, and as he turned to leave, Ned called after him:

“Get word to my mother at once; and you might as well see Polly Wogley before you leave, for I am convinced that she is as innocent as myself.”

“You 'll pay for her, Mr. Rand?”

“Certainly.”

“Very well, I shall find her at once.”

Gurly did not have far to go. From the station-house blotter he had already learned the number of Polly's cell; and as he was more familiar with all the passages and cells in that building than the architect who planned it, he had no trouble in finding the girl.

He looked through the grating, and saw her sitting down, with folded arms, and a light in her gray eyes that showed she had neither been crushed nor humiliated by the calamity that had come to her.

Gurly called to her, and without rising or showing any surprise at his presence, she asked:

“Well, what do you want?”

“To speak with you, Polly.”

“Speak on.”

“Come to the bars.”

“I can hear you here.”

“I 'm Ned Rand's lawyer, and he wants me to act for you. I have come to talk over the case with you.”

“You have, eh?”

“Yes, Polly.”

“Then you must take your pains for your pay. I 'm not a fool, Lawyer Gurly.”

“You 're just the reverse, Polly,” he said, coaxingly.

“You can be no lawyer of mine.”

“I can't?”

“I say you sha'n't! Now leave me!”

Polly motioned him away with a gesture of scorn and defiance, and the lawyer obeyed her at once.

As he trotted off he rubbed his nose and looked back now and then towards Polly's cell, wondering what she knew that made her so defiant.

Back and forth, back and forth Ned Rand paced his cell. His watch had been taken from him, with all his other valuables, by the officers the night before, so that he could not tell the time.

It seemed to him that it must be late in the afternoon, when an officer again appeared, and this time he opened the door and called in a very loud voice:

“Rand, come out.”

Ned obeyed; and he had but just reached the cold, gloomy corridor, when he heard a cry some distance away.

“Hello, what 's that?” asked the officer.

From the gloom in the direction of the office a fair girl, with golden hair, rushed towards Ned.

“My brother! My brother!” she cried; and the next instant Ethel was clasped to the prisoner's heart;

“You here, my sister!” exclaimed Ned.

“Here, Ned; here, my brother,” she sobbed, “to bear your trials with you, even to the death, and to ward off the unmerited disgrace your foes would bring upon you.”

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

JESSIE'S LOVER.

BY MARY E. MOFFAT.

“I will marry my ain love,” trilled the sweet voice, and then it came to a sudden hush, for there, before the singer, stood, as though summoned by magic, a young man, handsome enough to be the beau ideal of the most fastidious maiden's fancy.

The rustic lane in which they had met was one of those hawthorn-bordered, velvety pathways which had been marked out by nature's self. It followed the musical ripple of a shallow brook which shone like a line of silver at one side. Just at this spot it made an abrupt curve, and so it had happened that Jeanie Maclise had come face to face with the stranger thus suddenly.

He lifted the close-fitting cap which was crushed down over the short, crisp waves of his dark hair.

“May I ask if I am trespassing upon private property?” he said, deferentially, more for the sake of opening a conversation with Jessie than to gain information, and knowing that a question would put her at her ease, and make it her duty to be courteous, while another sort of address would probably cause her to regard him with distrust.

“It is private property, sir, but you are welcome to walk in it,” answered Jeanie, with a smile which set the dimples into her pink cheeks, and showed a charming glimpse of pearls between the pouting, childish lips; for although of womanly stature, Jeanie was in her fourteenth summer only, and wore upon her face the dewy, unsullied sweetness of that transition time between girlhood and womanhood.

“Thanks for your kind permission. Will you add to the favor by telling me the owner's name?”

“It is Donald Maclise, sir.”

“And you are Miss Maclise?” with a sudden smile in the dark eyes he bent upon her.

“Yes; but it 's not often they say ‘Miss’ to me. It's Jean they mostly call me. I am ower young to be made a young lady of.”

They had walked on side by side during their short soliloquy, Jeanie responding to the stranger's questions with a frankness which would soon have made him well acquainted with all of her belongings had no interruption come. But the sound of a stern voice, saying, “Jean, lass, what do you here?” caused her to start suddenly and flush, as though detected in a wrong action; for her father never addressed her in that way unless displeased.

The stranger saw her confusion, and hastened to answer for her.

“I am new to the neighborhood, and stopped to ask the young lady as to my whereabouts. I thank you for your courtesy,” with a deferential bow to Jeanie.

Then he hastened on, with footsteps which no longer lagged over the elastic greensward, as though loth to part company with it.

Donald Maclise waited until he was out of sight. Then he turned to his daughter.

“Know you the name of yon lad?”

“No, father. How should I, when I never set eyes upon him until the morn?”

Jeanie had recovered from her momentary consternation.

She stopped a moment to pick some branches of blossoming hawthorn.

“See, isn't the wee flower bonnie, father?”

And as she spoke, she detached one of the delicate blossoms from its clustered sisters and held it toward Donald.

“I 'll take these to mother. She loves the hawthorn as much as I do.”

The man had opened his lips to utter a sharp reproof to Jeanie for speaking so familiarly to the stranger. But a glance at her unconscious face disarmed his anger.

“She 's but a child. I 'll not put ideas into her head,” he thought. Then he answered aloud:

“You 'd not be Scotch, Jean, if your heart held not love for the bonny clusters in your hand. I 'm e'en as silly about it as the women folks themselves. Now, run home at once. I heard the mother asking for you.”

He stood and watched her for a moment as her light feet flew over the turf. Then he turned away, saying, half-aloud:

“I would that my Jean might ever stay as she is—a child.”

Then he sighed; but the sigh would have been a groan had he been gifted with foresight into the future. For, then he would have known that a woman's heart had that day awakened in Jeanie's breast, and that her childish beauty and innocence had already won her more than a passing interest in the handsome stranger's thoughts.

Bitter would the knowledge have been to him. Jeanie was his only daughter, and amid his group of stalwart sons she shone out supreme in his affections. Woe betide the man who should try to win away this one precious ewe lamb from her father's home, unless the coming suitor should chance to be one of his own choosing.

A day later a gay cavalcade issued forth from the gateway of the grounds surrounding Greycliffe Manor. It was composed of the titled and high-bred guests of the young owner of the place, who had but lately returned to the neighborhood from a sojourn abroad which had lasted since the death of his parents, a period of some ten years. He had now completed his studies, and in compliance with his father's will had returned to the place of his birth to take up his rightful duties as owner of the largest estate in the county. It remained to be seen whether the handsome, winsome youth would prove a fitting representative of the noble-hearted man who had laid down his burdens in the very heat of the day, and had followed his dearly-loved wife to the silent tomb. Well could the farmers who comprised Squire Northfield's tenantry recall his genial face to their memory; for it had ever worn a look of kindness for each and every one of them. Now, as the gay party passed along, many a horny hand was allowed to rest idly upon the farming implement it held, while an interested, weather-beaten face would be turned toward them, trying to make out which was the young squire. But more than curiosity was depicted upon one expressive young face, half hidden behind a clustering rose-vine, which twined around the porch where she was standing. Surprise and a feeling of dismay were plainly visible in Jeanie's startled eyes, as one among the group doffed his hat and bent low, as he recognized the fair vision framed in by the blooming clusters.

Well was it for the girl that her father was away. Had he seen the sudden brightening of the young squire's face as he caught sight of Jeanie, it would have put him into a tempest of rage. He had no idea of “quality folks,” as he called them, mingling too familiarly with plain farm people.

A bitter experience was the cause of Donald Maclise's aversion to this mingling of castes in daily intercourse.

His pet sister had been laid away in an untimely grave—her heart broken by having reciprocated the love of a young laird, whose parents had peremptorily interfered to prevent their marriage. What mattered it to Donald that his sister's lover had remained true to her memory and had lived a bachelor for her sweet sake? It had not saved his darling's life.

So it was that Jeanie, knowing her father's views about the gentry, felt a quiver of pain amid her gladness at seeing the young stranger thus at home amid a throng of courtly ladies and gentlemen.

It was not long before Squire Ralph found means to meet Jeanie again—ostensibly by accident—but in reality to gratify a strange longing to see again that bonny face and hear the tones of that sweet voice.

What his lips failed to say his bright, brown eyes told equally intelligibly—that he loved the pretty maiden who met his advances with such innocent pleasure, and when, later on in their acquaintance, he gave voice to his passion, it was only confirming what Jeanie had already felt sure of deep down in her happy heart.

* * * * * * *

But with the delight of knowing that he loved her came a sudden thought of her stern father.

“Oh,” she exclaimed, passionately, “it is not right for you to say such words to me—a farmer's daughter! You are rich and come of a high, proud family. I am not a fitting mate for you.”

“Talk not of such trifles. Say only that you love me, darling, and that you will be mine. I am my own master. No one has a right to dictate to me;” and as Jeanie was listening in a dazed, bewildered tremor of joy to his ardent words, she found herself suddenly caught to his throbbing heart, and felt his burning kisses upon her lips.

“Unhand my lass!” commanded a stern voice; and as he spoke the words Donald Maclise caught Jeanie by the arm with a grasp of iron, and flung her away from Ralph's encircling arms, hissing out:

“Go home and stay in your bed-chamber until I can follow and tell you my mind about your actions.”

Then, as Jeanie glided away out of sight, her face as pale as the white rose fastened in her belt, and her heart feeling like lead in her breast, Donald turned to Ralph.

“Have you not enough of this world's gifts that you must needs steal into my girl's heart and turn what was as white as snow into a guilty blackness? If I see you with my Jean again I will shoot you like a dog, even though it puts the hangman's noose about my neck. A Maclise is not a fitting wife for such as you, but she is too far above you to be your dupe.”

But Ralph's passionate anger at Donald's insinuation could not allow him to listen to such an accusation.

“Be silent,” he thundered, “or your gray hairs shall not keep me from teaching you to measure your words to me! I would no more injure a woman than I would commit murder, and least of all the woman whom I love. I wish to win Jeanie for my wife. Is it a sin to love her?”

Donald listened to Ralph with a paling face. He knew well that he was of age, and could do as he wished with regard to choosing a wife. But a new pain had now come into his heart. Was he to lose his bonny lass so soon? Surely she was over young to be coaxed out of her father's keeping. She was only a child, and knew nothing of life.

Then came the thought of Jeanie as he had seen her clasped unresistingly in Ralph's arms, his kisses raining over her face; and, with a mighty revulsion, the knowledge came that Jeanie loved Ralph even as he professed to love her. The change in his expression struck Ralph as a good omen, and, with a discretion worthy a much more experienced man, he said:

“I will not press for an answer now. I will come to your house to-morrow and hear what you say to my suit. Only this more I must say: I will make Jeanie a loving and faithful husband, and she shall be unbiassed in her actions as much as if she were single. Then, too, Greycliffe is near the farm, and it will not be too far for Jeanie to come to it daily if she wishes.” And, with this parting stroke of diplomacy, Ralph went his way.

The hours that followed for Donald witnessed a struggle in his mind between his stubborn pride and the sense of justice which ever finds its dwelling in the breast of a true Scot. Should he selfishly yield to his own wishes, and shut this new happiness out of Jeanie's life, just to keep her to himself? Then came the thought that if Jeanie loved this handsome young suitor, no act of mere obedience on her part could make her again his own fancy-free lass, devoted only to her parents. At last, with a face which bore upon its rugged lineaments the marks of the struggle which had been passing through his mind, he returned to his house.

“Where is Jean?” he asked. “Tell her I want her.”

Then he threw himself in a chair, and, with a moody brow, awaited her coming.

As Jeanie entered the room, she glanced timidly at her father, and then stood quietly beside him, evidently expecting a reprimand.

“Come to me, Jean,” he said, abruptly, but not harshly.

Raising her eyes again to his face, the girl recognized a pained expression, which was a new feature in it.

“Oh, father!” she sobbed. And with an impulsive movement, she threw her arms about his neck and buried her face upon his broad shoulders. “I am not to blame for what you saw. It was all so sudden, and it had just happened. Don't be angry with me.”

For reply, Donald said:

“Dost love thy old father, lass?”

“Dearly do I love thee, father. But why do you ask? Do you not know it?”

“And do you love the stranger lad? Tell me truly, Jean. Be not afraid to speak out.”

“I do love him, father, and would give my life to make him happy. But if you say the word, I'll never speak with him again. Your claim is first of all to your Jeanie.”

“But I may not say the word ‘nay,’ lass. He has asked me to give you to him in marriage, and will come for his answer on the morrow. What shall I tell him?”

With a sudden, surprised joy in her eyes, Jeanie raised her head from its hiding-place, and studied her father's face. At last she said:

“Do you mean that you will let me be Ralph's wife? Oh, father, I thought—”

“That a selfish old man meant to blight the happiness of two young lives? Well, so I did; but I have taken the second thought upon it, and that is always the best one. Remember this, though—a good daughter makes a good wife, and you must not forget the old father and mother in your grand new home. Unless I judge wrongly, Ralph Northfield will not love you the less for being true to the old friends.”

So the words of the song came true. Jeanie did “wed” her “ain love,” and in after years Donald Maclise felt glad and thankful that he had given his darling into Ralph's tender keeping. He learned that the more objects a heart has to love the more room it has for loving. So his unselfishness brought its own reward.

◆

—There is no way of repressing feeling so effectual as to deny its expression. The very effort so to calm the tones of our voice as to express less anger than one feels will of itself allay the anger and bring about a milder mood. The brave struggle to endure necessary suffering without inflicting cries and lamentations upon friends will enhance one's power of endurance. He who resolutely changes a whining and fretful tone for a cheerful one will soon find much less to fret about.

"WHEN HER BLUE EYES SMILED ON ME."

BY ABBE KINNE.

I know a little maiden,
  She is only seventeen,
And never has a fairer lass
  In any land been seen,
With eyes like purple pansies,
  And hair like sunlit gold;
And all the hours of her glad life
  Some newer charms unfold.

For she is like a bonny rose
  That 's only half in bloom,
And she is like the rosy dawn
  That 's breaking o'er the gloom.
And she is like all budding things
  That promise joy to be;
And she 's the promise of my life,
  The world and all to me.

My life was like a winter night
  Until I saw her face;
But cold and darkness fled away
  Before her spring-time grace;
And when her blue eyes smiled on me
  So innocent and sweet,
My lonely heart went out to her,
  A captive at her feet.

They say she is too young to wed—
  She is only seventeen—
But, since my lassie loves me well,
  What are the years between
Her promise and our happiness?
  Need life be desolate
Since, while she is too young to wed,
  I 'm not too old to wait?

◆

AUNT MERCY'S DOCTOR.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Perhaps there never were two betrothed people of whom it could be more truly said that they were suited to each other, than Roland Lester and Marcia Murray. They had fallen in love at first sight. They were both young, neither poor, and neither had any old love affairs to remember. Moreover, they were healthy, good looking, and of lively dispositions, and they would have been married within the first year of their engagement but for an Aunt Mercy, who fancied herself a great invalid and could not spare Marcia, and an affectionate mother who burst into tears at the bare thought of "her boy" being married. These affectionate if aggravating relatives had caused the young people to decide to remain single until they could feel that they were not too selfish in marrying and making a home of their own. Meanwhile, they were very happy. However, a cloud no bigger than a man's hand was about to appear upon the horizon. It arose one evening while Roland was saying good-bye to Marcia. Lingering over the parting, as lovers will, they had got, by slow degrees, to the hall door, when a man came running down stairs, caught his hat from the rack, drew his watch from his pocket, glanced at it, and rushed out of the door.

He was a yellow man, with dull, black hair, stiff as an Indian's, long eyes, black, not brown—as most of the eyes we call black are—wearing a queer, straggling black beard, and dressed in black clothes that fitted him very tightly. In fact, on the stage he would have passed for a well-made-up comic character.

His gait, motions and general effect were all suggestive of eccentricity, and his expression was unpleasant. The sudden roll of wheels without indicated that he had entered a carriage, which was driven away at a rapid rate.

"Who is that gentleman?" asked Roland.

"Aunt Mercy's doctor," replied Marcia. "Auntie says that he has kept her alive for years. That he has the most wonderful knowledge of her constitution."

"He seemed to be in a hurry," said Roland.

"He is always in a hurry. He has so many patients," said Marcia.

"I do not like his looks," said Roland. "He has the most unpleasant expression."

"Really, Roland," said Marcia, "I do not think any one ought to speak in that way of a wise, good man, who spends his life in benefitting the world. I actually revere him; and what is beauty, after all?"

"Beauty!" said Roland. "It is not a question of *beauty*, my dear. It is the evil expression I allude to. I should actually be afraid *of the* man."

"Of Dr. Luiz? *Afraid* of a man who gives his life for others?" gasped Marcia.

"He takes fees, and heavy ones, I have no doubt, from those others," responded Roland.

"He must live," said Marcia. "Oh, what a hard, cruel world this is! How falsely the best of men are judged!"

"You seem to feel strongly about this Dr. Luiz," said Roland.

"I do," said Marcia. "I simply adore Aunt Mercy. And to think that I should perhaps have lost her but for that dear man! And you hate him at sight!"

Roland made no reply, and for the first time since their engagement the two young people parted without any display of tenderness. In fact, the little scene had all the effect of a quarrel.

Roland took himself severely to task as he went upon his way. He declared to himself that he should have had more sense; that to admire the family doctor was the regular and proper thing; that no doubt Luiz was a very learned man. He had been, he thought, very cross and unpleasant, but he would make up for it on the next evening, when he was to take Marcia to a concert. He would buy her the loveliest bouquet possible. He would show her he was penitent. Judge of his astonishment when, late on the following afternoon, a little note was brought to him, containing only these words:

"Do not come for me to-night. I cannot go to the concert. MARCIA."

No excuse; no explanation; not a word of kindness. What did it mean? Roland endeavored to believe that Aunt Mercy had had one of her sudden attacks of illness. But why did not Marcia say so? He spent a very unhappy evening and a very forlorn day, and as early as was possible the following evening took his way to Marcia's home.

Alas! the servant, in reply to his inquiry for Miss Murray, replied with a brief "Not at home to any one," and Roland left the door in still greater perplexity, and flew home to pen a brief note, in which he protested his affection, and begged that Marcia would assure him that her feelings toward him were not changed.

A reply came in due time, but it only increased his anxiety. It was this:

"I had determined not to see you again, but perhaps it is better that you should come this evening. I can say what I must say better than I can write it."

"Determined not to see him any more!" Poor Roland fell into a terrible state of excitement when he read those words. Marcia could not mean it, but she must be extremely angry. And could it be because he had criticised Aunt Mercy's doctor, who was a complete stranger to him, of whom he had never even heard her speak?

What was this Dr. Luiz to her? A vague feeling of jealousy possessed him, and he said to himself:

"Women take strange fancies and admire strange men, and Luiz is not old."

However, he could form no distinct idea whatever. There seemed to be some strange cloud between himself and Marcia. It had arisen as suddenly as the mist arises from the sea. He could not see her through it, but he felt sure it would disperse. Nothing could really form a barrier between Marcia and himself—his Marcia. It could not be.

He sought her presence that evening, ready to accede to anything—ready to apologize and beg forgiveness—to pronounce Dr. Luiz one of the most charming men he had ever met, if that were demanded of him; and this time the servant admitted him, and he found himself in the presence of Marcia—*and her aunt.*

The old lady sat in a large arm-chair, looking unusually dignified. Marcia stood behind her, but came forward when Roland entered and gave him her hand.

He kissed it. She did not draw it away; there was not a trace of anger in her face. She looked pale and sad; that was all.

Aunt Mercy was a very charming old lady, and Roland liked her; but on this occasion he wished her at the antipodes. What engaged couple could properly make up a lover's quarrel in the presence of a maiden aunt, however estimable? He looked at Marcia. She sat down at a distance from him and looked at the fire in the brass grate. Then he said:

"It is warm to-day;" and she said: "Yes, it is;" and silence fell between them. Aunt Mercy made no movement to leave the room, as she usually did when Roland called; and he was growing very nervous, when Marcia said:

"Roland, I asked Aunt Mercy to be with me when I said to you what I have to say. It seemed to me that I could say it better. I—I want you to take back our engagement ring, Roland. I cannot marry you."

Then she arose, crossed the room, laid the ring on the table at his elbow, and ran to Aunt Mercy, who enfolded her in her arms.

Roland looked at the ring, but did not touch it.

"You wish to break our engagement," he said.

"I must," said Marcia.

"What have I done to deserve this, Marcia?" cried the young man.

"You have done nothing," said Marcia.

"It is not a question of doing anything," said Aunt Mercy. "Marcia's motives do her credit."

"My dear girl," cried Roland, "do you think I shall be unpleasant and quarrelsome? Indeed, no. If you are angry at me because of what I said about Dr. Luiz, I will retract every word. I judged hastily and without knowledge of him. I admit it."

"Oh, indeed you did," sighed Marcia; "but that has nothing to do with my determination."

"He is a wonderful man," said Aunt Mercy; "but Marcia is not one to quarrel over a few words spoken, as you say, in haste."

"Explain all this, then," said Roland.

"Mr. Lester," interposed Aunt Mercy, "Marcia has decided to keep her reasons to herself; they are excellent ones. And now you had better take leave, my young friend. *No good can come of prolonging this interview.*"

"I should like, at least, to see Marcia alone for a moment," pleaded Roland.

"If she wishes it," said Aunt Mercy.

Marcia only sighed, and gave a sad little smile.

On this Aunt Mercy wrapped her little shawl about her shoulders and left the room. Roland went closer to Marcia. He did not touch her, but they were very near each other.

"Have you ceased to love me?" he asked.

"No, Roland," said Marcia.

The tears poured out of her eyes. She wiped them softly away with her handkerchief.

"In that case," said Roland, "as I love you more tenderly than ever, there can be no reason for such an announcement as that you have made. I cannot live without you."

"You must try, Roland," said Marcia, paler than ever. "That is inevitable—we must part. I hope you will find some one who can make you happy. I shall never cease to think of you. I—I—"

"You shall not send me from you," said Roland, clasping her hand. "Tell me why you thought it necessary to go through this scene."

"It is my fate," said Marcia. "I have nothing to do with it; it is fate."

"'Fate,' Marcia?" said Roland, repeating the word. "Marcia, will you swear to me that Dr. Luiz has nothing to do with this?"

Marcia looked at him earnestly, and said nothing.

"Will you swear that?" he asked again; and she answered, slowly:

"No, Roland; I cannot swear falsely."

"Then I see it all,' said the young man. "The rascal has won your heart. He has stolen you from me. You are false to *me.* I detected your admiration for the fellow in your anger at my criticism of his appearance the other night. Well, so be it, then. Take your choice. At least you had the love of an honest man. You prefer a rascal."

He turned from her, caught the engagement ring from the table and tossed it into the fire, and strode from the room without a word.

Had he returned he would have seen Marcia lying in a swoon upon the floor. There Aunt Mercy found her when she returned after hearing the furious bang of the door which indicated Roland's departure.

It was well that Dr. Luiz was not ascending the steps at that moment.

Roland suffered terribly for a long while. Nothing is so wretched as disappointed love, or so desperate as jealousy. Finally he settled into a dull and gloomy condition foreign to his nature.

New York became unendurable to him, and he forsook a lucrative position to accept a much inferior one in San Francisco. It was merely that he might bid adieu to scenes forever embittered to him by Marcia's conduct.

A year passed—five—ten. The trouble of his youth became only a sad dream. At forty he married a woman younger than himself, and very handsome.

There was no romance between them, but there was much honest affection.

"It is what all love affairs end in," Roland Lester used to say to himself; but, for all that, he knew that he had missed life's sweetest episodes.

San Francisco had grown a good deal since Roland Lester settled there, and more professional men had mingled with the miners. One day, as he hurried along the street, anxious to get home to dinner, he suddenly stood still and stared at a figure advancing toward him. It was gaunt and active. Its clothes fitted tightly to its person. It had a sallow skin, long black hair, and black eyes, like to small jet beads in a sea of pale yellow. It had, above all, an evil expression, vailed by affected saintliness.

"Doctor Luiz!" gasped Roland Lester.

He turned and stared after him. He lifted his fist and shook it in the air. He uttered an expression of hate and indignation.

"Amen!" said a voice behind him. "I see you know something of that fellow Luiz."

"And you?" said Lester.

"Oh, I—" said the other. "That fellow ought to be ordered out of the town. He is a quack of the worst sort. My wife had a friend who was his victim—Miss Marcia Murray. He made a prey of imaginative women, and kept them for his patients when they were really perfectly well. This girl had a little mole on her neck. He told her it was a cancer. He doctored her for cancer for five years. At last she had sense enough to doubt him. Another physician healed the sore the fellow had made in a few weeks. But my wife told me he had ruined the girl's life. She was engaged to some one, of whom she was very fond, and broke the engagement the day he told her that lie about the cancer."

"Good heavens! was that the reason?" cried Roland.

"Yes. You know she felt as a woman would about such a thing," said the other.

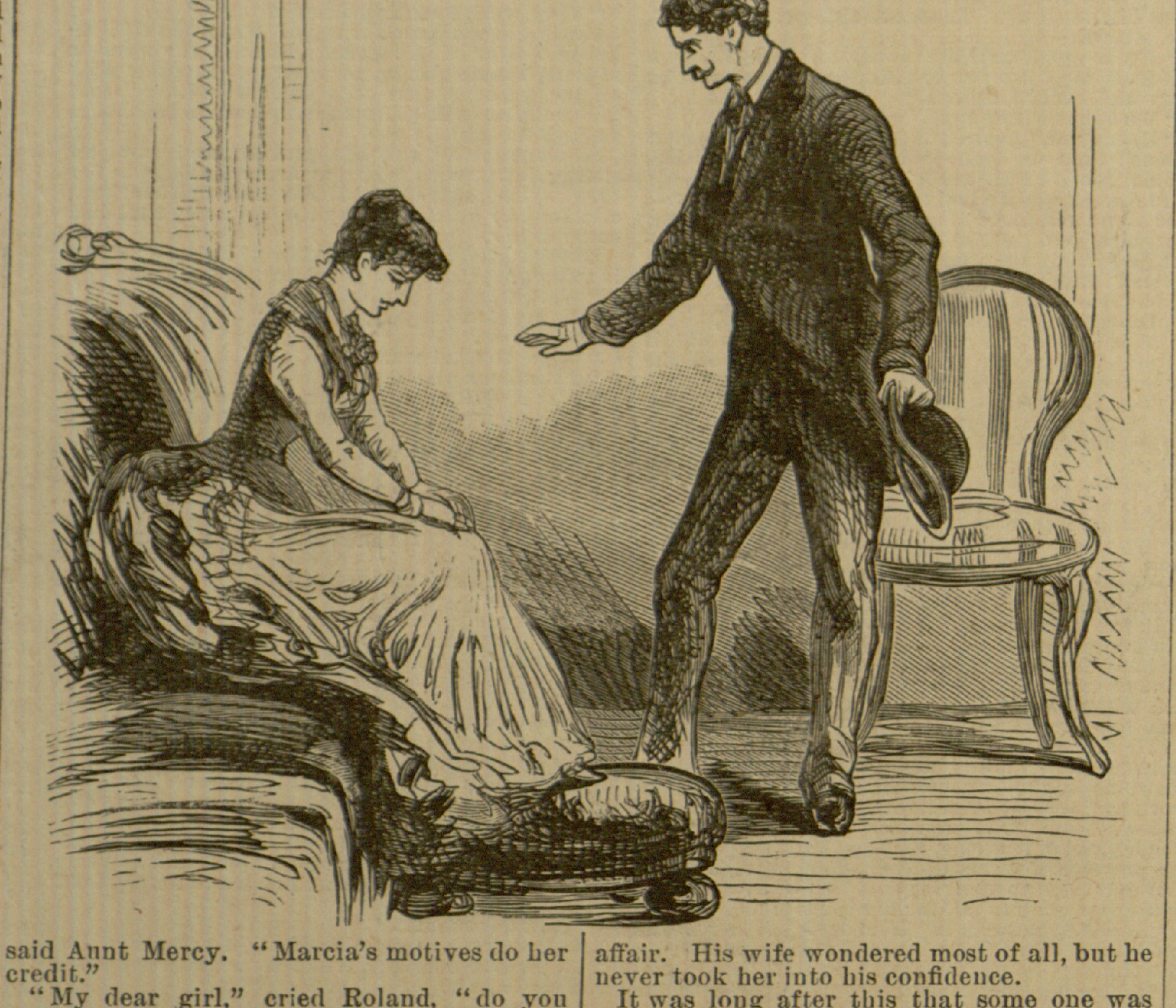
"We must make the fellow go," said Roland Lester.

A little while after this Dr. Luiz made his escape from San Francisco with his life and his baggage; and people wondered that Lester should make himself so prominent in the affair. His wife wondered most of all, but he never took her into his confidence.

It was long after this that some one was speaking of Marcia Murray.

"Going to be married? Why, I fancied she would be one of the single sisters. She must be forty."

"Yes," said some one else, "but, you see, an old lover has returned from California—a widower. And I suppose she never forgot him, and all that sort of thing. Anyhow, the wedding is to be next Wednesday."



◆

New York House-Hunting.

Why should all the world move at the same time—at least all the New York world? The peculiar custom amazes strangers, as well it may. There is something shocking to a person of refinement in examining an inhabited house, under protest, as it were, led about by an injured and offended matron, stared at by the indignant occupants of the rooms entered, catching sight of a fleeing lady as she conceals herself in a wardrobe, and being sarcastically pleaded with by some one behind a locked door to "wait until he is presentable."

The maid in the kitchen seems to be your enemy, and the little pug dog barks at you. You begin to feel as though you were a most impertinent person; and yet you modestly look at your toes most of the time, agree with the expressed opinion of the lady of the house that you don't care to see the pantries, poke about in the impenetrable obscurity of the curtained and shaded parlors, and learn nothing of the real condition of the house which, if you hire, you must live in for a twelve month.

The furnished house, at all events, cannot be fairly seen. The worst faults may be hidden, or, perhaps, shabby furniture lends its effect to the rooms, and you fancy the sewerage all wrong because cabbage has been cooked for dinner. Meanwhile, your own home is no longer a place of refuge. The bell rings constantly. People, who have not your modesty, enter by main force, at hours you have set aside for privacy, and render your life a burthen.

The fact that an occupied house cannot be properly examined has much to do, I am sure, with the frequency of removals. The tenant enters without really knowing what he has hired, and his one remedy for having made a mistake is that he can escape from the consequences of his blunder "next May." The only way of avoiding the discomfort of our curious way of changing residences is to go into a new house; and new houses are unfit to live in. In Paris the first occupants of a new house are called plaster-wipers. They come from the crowd of poor people who risk their lives to live cheaply. Plaster is deadly when newly laid, and there is doubt that a house of brick or stone is fit to live in until it has become thoroughly seasoned.

The "permit" system is also a trial. You are told by people resident in Harlem that you must get a "permit" from an agent near the Battery before you can be admitted. Tenants believe that the "permit," in some mysterious way, protects them from invasion. The agent, however, will give any one a "permit," his intention being to keep the letting in his hands by means of the "permit." He has no wish that tenants should see the house and go to the owner, or that other real estate men should let the place and reap the profit.

It is impossible to say which is to be pitied most, the person who wants to see the house or the person whose house is seen. A great deal of Christian charity needs to be exercised by both parties. I can see no good reason why New Yorkers should endure what no other citizens submit to. The custom has grown strong, and it would be hard to break it now, but it is detestable and should be done away with.

In nearly all other places a house is usually empty before it is to let, and every considerate landlord has sweeping, scrubbing and kalsomining, with any necessary repairs, done at this time. Tenants move into a clean house, of which they know everything that can be known. Here one shudders at the memories of past negligence and illnesses that seem to linger in the walls of a house out of which people have just tumbled. I remember being told by a lady that after she had hired a house she learned that the former occupant had hung himself to a chandelier hook. When she moved in she was obliged to take the rope from the chandelier. It had only been cut half way up.

The story is suggestive. M. K. D.

◆

The Danger of Kissing.

[From the Norristown Herald.]

"A young man in Louisville was choked to death while kissing a girl." His rival, it is inferred, suddenly appeared on the scene. In ordinary cases, it is the girl who is the victim of the choking.

SCIENCE.

At a recent meeting of the Anthropological Institute, in London, Professor Ferrer read an interesting paper on Functional Topography of the Brain. He discussed the question whether a scientific phrenology could now be established, and concluded that the psychological aspects of brain functions are still too far from being made out to permit the foundation of a practical psychology in any degree serviceable to the physician or the anthropologist. On the question as to how far it was possible, from an anatomical examination of the brain, to form an estimate of the forces and capacities of the individual, the lecturer pointed out many difficulties. As a rule, however, greater anatomical development, he thought, might be considered as an index of greater functional capacity.

The recent earthquake in Southern France, at Nice and other places near the coast, is the first one of any consequence to affect France in modern times, for although her neighbors, Spain and Italy, have often felt seismic shocks, the mountain ranges of the Alps and the Pyrenees have been effective barriers to the transmission of tremors from either peninsula. In September, 1865, a slight earthquake is recorded as having been observed near Tours and Blois, but it did no harm; and the Essex earthquake of 1883, in England, was far more severe than any which had occurred in France until the shock of February last.

The area covered by the earthquake shocks of February 23, 1887, in Italy and Southern France is roughly estimated at 500 miles in one direction by 400 miles in another, extending from Rome to Marseilles and Avignon, and from Genoa to Geneva. The land space affected was thus not less than 90,000 square miles, exceeding in extent the whole of Great Britain. Of course, the force of the shocks was not equal over this vast territory, nor was every place within the area affected, but the same shocks were felt practically at the same time at places within the wide limits indicated.

A famous people of Southwestern China called the Shui-Kia, or "Water People," because they dwell on the banks of rivers, possess heirlooms in the shape of books, and also round seals—written like the books in the ancient Chinese seal characters—which they cannot understand, but preserve with reverence. One of these interesting books, consisting of a manuscript of thirteen folios, has recently been secured by the British Museum through one of the British consuls in China.

Two new medicines, prepared from organic compounds, are now being successfully introduced. Salol, made by heating salicylic and carbolic acid with a dehydrated agent, is to take the place of salicylic acid as a powerful combatant of rheumatism, because it does not disturb the stomach as does salicylic acid. The other new medicine, antifebrin, is better than quinine for reducing fever. It is made by heating aniline with acetic acid, and is called by chemists acetanilide.

An American, Mr. G. W. Hill, of Washington, has received the gold medal of the British Royal Astronomical Society for his researches on the lunar theory. Mr. Hill had applied some of the methods of modern mathematics to the lunar problem, having, among other things, made use of an infinite determinant, and his investigation contained the first application to a physical or astronomical subject of such an instrument of research.

Hitherto, iodine, like the allied elements chlorine and bromine, has been known to occur in nature only in a combined state, but now free iodine has been discovered in the water of Woodhall Spa near Lincoln in England. The water is colored a decided brown by the iodine. A little carbon bi-sulphide will remove the iodine from the water, the element dissolving in the characteristic violet color.

The carbonic acid contained in the atmosphere amounts to three volumes in 10,000 of air, as recently critically determined by Dr. Blochmann, a German scientist. The amount is about the same whether over sea or over land, but over land there is more carbonic acid in the air in the daytime than at night, while over the sea there would appear to be no such difference.

The latest application of celluloid is its use for casting stereotype plates for printing. Such plates made of celluloid are light and elastic, take ink freely, and yield a clear impression. Moreover, they can be easily sent by mail, and require but little packing.

◆

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

JULIA (St. Louis) writes: "I wish you would give me your opinion on my troubles. About five months ago I became acquainted with a young man. I saw him occasionally, but he never called on me regularly, although we became very good friends. One evening he called on me, and just as he was going home he told me how he loved me. At the same time he said he daren't think of anything serious for a long time, as he had his parents to take care of. He told me he did not want to keep me from other company, if I wanted to go with other young men. After a while he asked me if I loved him, and I said yes. He told me again how much he thought of me, and before he left me he gave me to understand that I should be his wife if I would wait some time. He said: 'We are both young, and have time yet.' I did not see him again for a week, when he met me at a friend's house, and it being Christmas he gave me a very nice present, that cost at least fifty dollars. I accepted it. Still, he does not call on me often. I see him probably once in three weeks, and he lives only three blocks away from my home. I have often thought of asking him why he gave me that present, and why he does not call on me oftener. He once gave me a hint that his folks weren't very much in favor of his calling on me. Now, would you advise me to speak to him, and let him explain why he gave me that present after speaking to me as he did, or do you think I should let it go? I have often been asked to go out by other parties, but for his sake I declined. I love him so much that I do not know what to do. Please advise me." Under the circumstances which you describe, it would be proper for you to carry out your idea with regard to asking the young man why he gave you the present which you mention. That would open up a conversation which would enable him to explain his conduct. He doubtless loves you, but is probably restrained by his parents in such a way as to prevent him from making any warm demonstrations of his affection.

J. Q. S. (Chicago) writes: "Will you be so kind as to settle a dispute which some friends and myself have, by telling us how many elevated railroads there are in New York, and what their respective lengths are?" There are four elevated railroads in New York—the Second Avenue, the Third Avenue, the Sixth Avenue and the Ninth Avenue roads. The Second Avenue road runs its cars from South Ferry to One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street, a distance of a little over eight miles and three-quarters. The Third Avenue road also runs its cars from South Ferry to One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street, the distance by its route being a trifle less than eight miles and a half. These two roads use the same tracks between South Ferry and Chatham Square, a distance of nearly a mile and a half. The Third Avenue road has a branch from Chatham Square to the City Hall; also a branch at Thirty-fourth street to Hunter's Point Ferry, and another at Forty-second street to the Grand Central Station. The Sixth Avenue road runs its cars from South Ferry to Fifty-eighth street, a little over five miles and a half. It also has a branch beginning at Fifty-third street and running to the Ninth Avenue road, so that a part of its cars run to One Hundred and Fifty-fifth street, a little over ten miles and three-quarters. The Ninth Avenue road runs from the South Ferry to One Hundred and Fifty-fifth street, a trifle over ten miles.

SARAH (Medina, N. Y.) writes: "I was reading this morning about the capture of a white lady by Indians in South America. It stated that one of the Indians 'threw his *bolas* around the legs of the lady's horse, and rendered her escape impossible.' I should like to know what a bolas is, and how it is used, and will be obliged if you will give me the information." A bolas is a weapon used by the Indians on the great plains of South America principally for capturing horses and cattle, but also in war. It consists of two balls covered with leather, and united by a leather thong from six to eight feet long. The Indian holds one of the balls in his right hand, whirls the other round his head till sufficient momentum is acquired, and then sends the balls whirling like chain shot through the air. The bolas strikes the legs of the animal at which it is hurled, and the thong winding tightly around them, renders escape impossible. When the bolas is used in war, the balls are made of stone or iron, and can be used with great effect on masses of men.

D. S. L. writes: "Is there any way of finding out how often the fourth day of March, the day that the President of the United States is inaugurated, comes on a Sunday? How many times since our government was formed has inauguration day come on Sunday, and when will it come on that day again? Who were the Presidents whose inauguration had to go over till Monday because the fourth of March came on Sunday?" The fourth of March falls on Sunday once in every twenty-eight years. It has fallen on that day four times since our government was formed. The first time was 1793, when Washington's second inauguration took place. The second occasion was in 1821, when Monroe was inaugurated the second time. The third time was in 1849, when General Taylor was inaugurated, and the fourth, in 1877, on the occasion of Hays's inauguration. The fourth of March will fall on Sunday again in 1905.

W. R. (Carristeo Station, N. Y.) writes: "As I and others differ in opinion in regard to the size of the Capitol at Washington, D. C., will you please give us the size of it on the outside? We do not care about the inside. And how far is it from the Capitol to the Treasury building and the President's house?" The entire length of the Capitol is seven hundred and fifty-one feet, and its greatest depth, including porticoes and steps, is three hundred and forty-eight feet. Altogether, it covers over three and a half acres of ground. The President's Mansion, or the White House, as it is usually called, is about a mile and a half from the Capitol, and the Treasury Department is a little east of the White House.

A MECHANIC (New York) writes: "I would like to have the following question answered, if you would be so kind: I am a man about thirty years of age, and keep company with a lady about twenty years of age. I am engaged to be married to her. We intended to go to a ball; I do not dance, but she does. Is it right for her to dance with other gentlemen? She says it is; I say it is not right to do so. Please answer in your next number." In such a case your betrothed should not do anything which would be disagreeable to you, just as, in any similar circumstances, you should not do anything which would be disagreeable to her.

W. S. writes: "I am a young man twenty-one years of age. I am of good family, and have a good trade. I met a young lady not long ago whom I love very much, but I fear she does not love me in return. Please inform me what to do to win this young lady's love." You must be as attentive and agreeable as possible to her, and let her see, by your course of life, that you are worthy of a young lady's love.

R. C. T. (Delhigh, N. Y.) writes: "I was visiting in a neighboring village several months ago, and became acquainted with a young lady that I liked very much. She appeared to be about eighteen or twenty years old, and on sounding her brother on the subject he gave me to understand that she was younger than he was, and he was not quite twenty-one. I am nearly thirty. The lady's parents seemed to like me, and I visited their house often. The better I became acquainted with the young lady the better I liked her, and, to make a short story of it, I soon fell deeply in love with her, and offered her my heart and hand, which she accepted. I was very happy till a cousin of the young lady's—a man about forty years old—came to visit the family. I was there when he arrived. On seeing him my betrothed turned pale and seemed greatly agitated. This surprised me and made me feel very uneasy. I was still more surprised on seeing that the cousin's arrival caused a flutter among the whole family. He didn't seem to notice it, but was gay and genial in his manner. He called my betrothed by her Christian name, and spoke of the good times they had had together *more than a quarter of a century before!* At this she left the room, and her parents looked very grave. After a while the cousin and I took a stroll, and I learned from him that the young lady was thirty-one years old—nearly two years older than I am. I hunted up her brother and asked him why he had deceived me as to his sister's age. He laughed, said that all is fair in love and war, and that, seeing that his sister and I liked each other, he thought he would help us along by giving me to understand that she was just about the age I wanted her to be. I was so annoyed that I took my leave without seeing my betrothed, and have not visited her since. My discovery of the deception that had been practiced on me occurred ten days ago, and I have been trying to think what I ought to do about it. But I cannot bring my thoughts to a focus on any plan. My love for the lady seems to have died out, and I cannot bear the idea of making her my wife. What course would it be best for me to pursue? I hope you will advise me at once, as I am situated very unpleasantly." You should kindly tell the lady just how you feel, and hear what she has to say. Perhaps she will at once release you from the engagement. If she does, that will end the matter; and if she does not, you will probably get some idea from her manner as to what course it would be best for you to take.

A. Y. T. (Alabama) writes: "I have a young lady friend who is engaged to a gentleman, and it is about this I wish to ask. He has been very wild, but has settled down somewhat lately. But he cannot be relied upon; you cannot put any confidence in anything he says. He is also addicted to drink. He says he does not drink anything now, but a third lady, who is very sensitive to the odor of any kind of liquor, has repeatedly detected it on him. He has been accused of drinking, but always emphatically denies it; but after, say, about three or four weeks, he will acknowledge that he had not drank since, but that he did drink on that occasion. He repeatedly breaks his promises. Also, he has no means whatever, and has several little debts which he has said were paid, and it has been discovered since that they are not paid. He urges the young lady to get married, saying he can save money better if he is married. The young lady thinks that by kind reproof and encouragement she may reform him, but the other lady who detects the liquor on him thinks it is of no use. Now, I would like to know what your opinion is on the subject. Do you think that he can be reformed, or do you think the young lady had better let him go at once?" It is a dangerous experiment for a girl to marry a man who is addicted to drink, in the hope of reforming him. If he will not reform himself thoroughly before marriage, it is almost certain that he will not be reformed afterwards. A reform in such a matter, in order that it may be enduring, must be based on personal principle and not on a mere desire to gratify the wishes of others.

CHARLES M. is in love, but is so bashful that he cannot pop the question, and wishes to know whether he could ask his sister to be the bearer of his declaration? There would certainly be no impropriety in that, but it would be a kind of carrying coals to Newcastle; for the two girls, being friends, must have often talked, and maybe laughed, over your unmistakable preference. Manage the affair in person. Making love by deputy is as bad as eating a dinner by deputy. The hours immediately after the mutual avowal are the most ecstatic in the whole period of courtship.

ADELAIDE (Milwaukee) writes: "In the case of a young lady and a young gentleman who are very good friends, is it proper for the young lady to ask the young gentleman to call, or should the gentleman first ask permission of the young lady to call on her?" If the young lady's parents know the gentleman, and consent that she should ask him to call, it would be proper for her to do so. The gentleman might call on the family, however, without being invited, and then, if they wished him to call again, they could invite him to do so.

A COTTAGE GIRL is desirous of knowing whether it is improper for her to keep any presents given her by a young man, who she is sure is much attached to her—but she is positive she cannot return his affection. Decidedly improper—because it is practicing a kind of deception on the young man, in leading him to believe what is really not the fact. Judged severely, it would not be over-honest conduct—for, as lawyers would say, there is no valid consideration between parties so situated. The presents should be returned, with a kind note, containing a frank declaration.

E. H. (Texas) writes: "Which is grammatically correct, 'To-morrow *will be* Monday, or to-morrow *is* Monday?" Strictly speaking, the first form is the correct one. We should say, for example, "Yesterday *was* Thurday, to-day *is* Friday, and to-morrow *will be* Saturday." But it has become so common, in familiar conversation, to say, "To-morrow is Saturday," etc., that such an expression, used colloquially, is not looked upon as erroneous.

SCHOOL-GIRL writes: "Would you be so kind as to inform me who is the author of the following lines:

'No flocks that range the valley free
  To slaughter I condemn,
Taught by that power that pities me,
  I learn to pity them?'"

Goldsmith is the author of them. They occur in his poem of *The Hermit.*

ELIZA writes: "I am engaged to a young man of good family who is nineteen years old. My parents object. They say I am too young to marry, as I am only sixteen years old. Please tell me what to do, for I love him very much." You should obey your parents, and wait until you and the young man arrive at a suitable age for marrying—say, till he at least becomes of age.

H. J. K. (Kalamazoo, Mich.) writes: "What is the value of a florin, and in what country is it coined?" Florins are now issued from the mints of several European countries, and differ in value, the silver florins varying from twenty-three cents (the lowest value) to fifty-four cents. The florin takes its name from a coin first struck at Florence, in Italy, in the twelfth century, which was noted for its beauty.

L. C. R. (Bristol, Maine) writes: "Do you know if the '—— —— Claim Agency,' of New York, is an honest and reliable firm?" We have no faith in any of the agencies or agents that profess to be able to obtain fortunes from England for American claimants. As a rule, they are altogether untrustworthy. A number of persons engaged in that business have been arrested within a recent period on charges of swindling.

ALEXANDER F. (New Haven) is acquainted with two young ladies—sisters—who, in his presence, are very friendly and cordial, but behind his back say evil and false things of him. His course is a very clear one. He must treat them with the courtesy due to their sex, but studiously avoid their society. Double-facedness is not to be tolerated, even in a beautiful woman.

RUFUS writes: "Can you tell me what the population of the State of New York was when the last United States census was taken, and also what it is now?" The last United States census was taken in 1880. The population of the State of New York was then 5,083,173. Its estimated population, based on the presidential vote of 1884, and the vote for governor in 1885, is now 5,527,000.

B. D. W. (Clarkeville, Ohio) writes: "Is there a passage in the Bible where it says that hell is full of little children not a span long? If there is, where can I find it?" There is no such passage in the Bible. Statements similar to the one you mention have been ascribed to various old-fashioned theologians, but they cannot be authentically traced.

O. T. (Braceville) writes: "Would you please tell me if an electric machine that is used for giving light will give heat in proportion, so that, if it gave enough light for a house, it could at the same time give out heat to warm it the same as steam would?" The electric apparatus used for giving light does not generate any heat.

NELLIE (Hutchinson, Kan.) writes: "Will you please tell me the right pronunciation and the meaning of the word Chautauqua?" It is pronounced sha-*taw*-kwah, with the accent on the second syllable, and the *a* of the first syllable sounded short. The name is a corruption of an Indian phrase that means "foggy place."

L. S. (California) writes: "Please tell me what you think of my writing? Which is best, a fine or a large handwriting for a girl of sixteen? How do you pronounce Scituate?" A medium hand-writing, neither too fine nor too coarse, is best for a girl. Yours is just about right. The proper name Scituate is pronounced exactly like the word situate.

HENRY W.—It was excessively rude in you not to have introduced the two young ladies to each other. Your acquaintance with both warranted the step. Besides, it was a sad breach of etiquette to leave your intended standing alone in the street, while you held a conversation with another young lady. That was boorish.

HAGAR writes: "Would it be proper for a young lady to leave a room where another lady and gentleman were talking in a way that was offensive to her, and about matters that she was not at all interested in?" Yes. But she should leave as quietly as possible.

EMMA writes: "How long is the Suez Canal, and how deep is it?" The length of the Suez Canal is about one hundred miles, seventy-five miles of which is actual canal, while for twenty-five miles it passes through lakes. The depth of the canal is twenty-six feet.

AMANDA writes: "Please tell me the meaning of my name; also the meaning of Amelia, Claudia and Frances." Amanda means worthy to be loved; Amelia, busy, energetic; Claudia is the feminine of Claude or Claudius, and means lame. Frances is the feminine of Francis, and means free.

L. C. G. writes: "Can you tell me how wide the Isthmus of Panama is?" It varies a good deal in width, being one hundred miles wide at its greatest breadth, and only thirty miles wide at its narrowest section.

LUCY (Illinois) writes: "Does E-v-a spell Ev-a as well as E-va? If not, how is Ev-a spelled?" Eva is pronounced E-va. *Ev-a* would be a mispronounciation of the name. If one insisted on calling a person *Ev-a,* the name should be spelled Evva.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*